

THE ATTIC THEATRE

*HAIGH*

HENRY FROWDE, M.A.

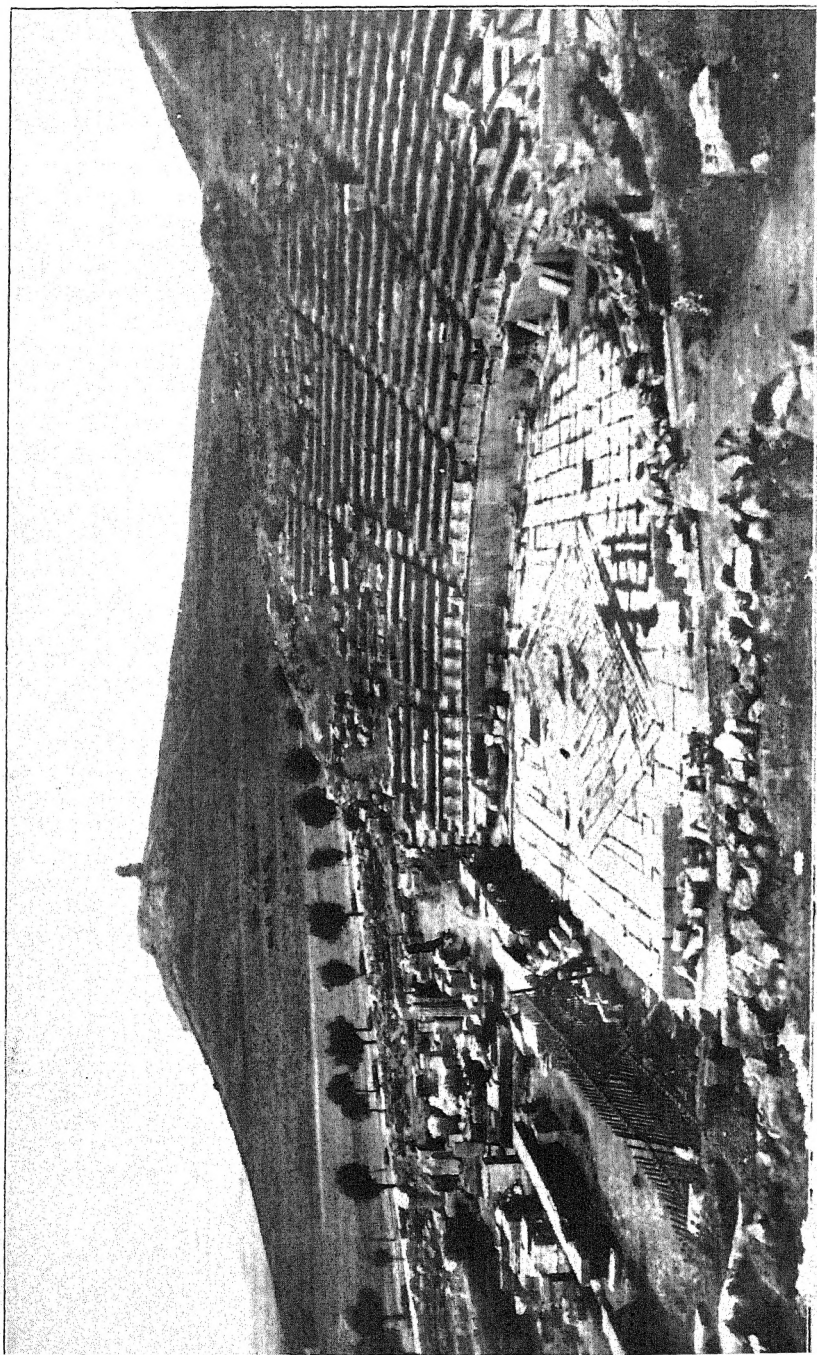
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THEATRE AT ATHENS, FROM THE EAST

# THE ATTIC THEATRE

A DESCRIPTION OF THE STAGE AND THEATRE  
OF THE ATHENIANS, AND OF THE DRAMATIC  
PERFORMANCES AT ATHENS

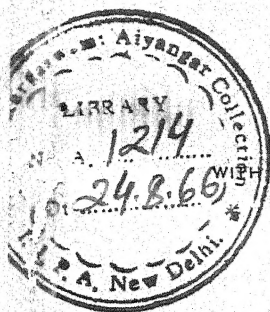
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## PREFACE

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My purpose in this book has been to collect and piece together all the available information concerning the outward features and surroundings of the old Athenian dramatic performances; in other words, to write a history of the Attic drama from the theatrical, as opposed to the literary, point of view. The subject is one which has been practically revolutionised during the last half century, partly through the labours of various scholars in interpreting the notices of the old grammarians, but more especially owing to the rich discoveries of inscriptions relating to theatrical affairs, and the information supplied by excavations in the old Greek theatres. But in spite of the copious accession of fresh materials, it is now more than fifty years since any work has appeared in English, in which this particular department of Greek dramatic history has been treated in a comprehensive manner. The neglect is all the more remarkable, as the subject is undeniably of great interest and importance, and this for two reasons. In the first place it is difficult to understand and appreciate the peculiar qualities of the existing Greek plays, without acquiring some knowledge of the circumstances under which they were produced, and the limitations within which the ancient dramatic poets had to work. In the second place, as the Attic drama was essentially a public institution, and formed one of the most conspicuous elements in the national life, the various details connected with its management are incidentally most instructive, because of the light which they throw upon the habits, feelings,

and tastes of the old Athenians. It is owing to these several considerations that the present work has been undertaken.

Unfortunately, with the exception of a list of names and definitions in Pollux, and a few observations upon the theatre in Vitruvius, none of the ancient treatises, which dealt with the various portions of the subject, have been preserved. The materials have in consequence to be collected from the most multifarious sources—from casual remarks in ancient authors, from incidental references in the Greek dramas, from obscure and often contradictory notices in the scholiasts and grammarians, from old inscriptions, and the ruins of Greek theatres, from vases, statuettes, wall-paintings, and other works of art. In the treatment of questions which depend upon evidence of this intricate and complex character, it is inevitable that there should be much diversity of opinion, and that numberless opportunities should be afforded for ingenious conjectures and fanciful combinations. As a matter of fact the whole history of the Attic drama has been to a certain extent obscured by the mass of controversy and hypothesis to which it has given rise. My purpose throughout the following pages has been to keep close to the original sources of information, to restrict myself to such facts as seem to be fairly well established by the evidence, and to clear the subject of all those fine-drawn theories and conjectures which have no definite foundation to depend upon. For every statement concerning the Attic drama I have been careful to quote the ultimate authority, and the plan which I have adopted, in the citation of evidence, has been as follows. Where a passage is appealed to in support of some mere matter of fact, about which there could be no particular difference of opinion, I have been content to simply give the reference. But in cases where the inference is more dubious, I have quoted the original authorities in full, so as to enable the reader to judge for himself as to the validity of the views adopted in the text. It would have been impossible, within the limits of a single volume, to discuss in detail all the points concerning which controversies have been raised. The more important questions I have treated at considerable length; but

as regards matters of minute detail and trivial interest, I have merely given my own opinion in the text, and appended a statement of the evidence in the notes.

The various books, articles, monographs, and dissertations, which have been written on the subject of the Attic theatre and dramatic performances, are numerous enough in themselves to constitute a considerable literature. It will be sufficient in the present place to mention those to which I have been principally indebted. Of writings in which the subject is treated as a whole the most important is Albert Müller's *Lehrbuch der Griechischen Bühnenalterthümer* (Freiburg, 1886)—a work which is conspicuous for the industry, learning, and sound judgment displayed in its compilation, and for the lucid manner in which an immense amount of information is compressed into a comparatively limited space. The exhaustive account which it contains of the bibliography of the subject is especially valuable. Another book which I have found of the greatest help is Schneider's *Das Attische Theaterwesen* (Weimar, 1835). It consists mainly of a citation in full of all the ancient passages which refer to performances in the theatre; and although Schneider's own views and inferences are now mostly antiquated, and his collection of 'Quellen' requires to be supplemented, the work will always be most interesting and serviceable to students of the Attic drama. The description of the Greek dramatic performances in the third volume of Bergk's *Griechische Literaturgeschichte* (Berlin, 1884) has been exceedingly useful and suggestive; and considerable assistance has been derived from the similar account in vol. ii. pt. 2 of Bernhardt's *Grundriss der Griechischen Litteratur* (Halle, 1880).

As regards the separate portions of the subject, the following is a list of the treatises which I have found of most assistance. For the Dionysiac festivals: Böckh's dissertation, *Vom Unterschiede der Lenäen, Anthesterien, und ländlichen Dionysien*, Berlin, 1816; A. Mommsen's *Heortologie*, Leipzig, 1864. For the arrangements connected with the dramatic contests and the production of a play: Rohde's article on the Proagon in *Rhein. Museum*, xxxviii. p. 251 ff.; Sauppe's paper, *Ueber die Wahl*

der Richter, &c., in *Sächs. Gesellschaft der Wissensch. zu Leipzig*, 1855; Petersen's *Preisrichter der grossen Dionysien*, Progr. Dorpat, 1878; Lipsius, *Ueber die dramatische Choregie*, in *Sächs. Gesell. der Wissensch.*, 1885. For the structure and arrangement of the theatre: Kawerau's article *Theatergebäude*, in vol. iii. of Baumeister's *Denkmäler des klassischen Alterthums*, 1888; Vischer's *Die Entdeckungen im Dionysostheater* (*Neues Schweizerisches Museum*, 1863); Julius' article, *Das Theater des Dionysos* (*Zeitschrift für bild. Kunst*, 1878); J. R. Wheeler's *Theatre of Dionysus* (*Papers of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, vol. i); Kabbadias, on the theatre at Epidaurus, in *Πρακτικά τῆς ἐν Ἀθήναις ἀρχαιολογικῆς ἐταιρίας*, 1881 and 1883; the account of the Greek theatre by Wieseler in vol. 83 of Ersch and Gruber's *Allgemeine Encyclopädie*, 1866; Wieseler's *Theatergebäude und Denkmäler des Bühnenwesens bei Griechen und Römern*, 1851; and Strack's *Das altgriechische Theatergebäude*, Potsdam, 1843. On the question of the scenery: Niejahr's *Quaestiones Aristophaneae Scaenicae* (Greifswald, 1877); Sommerbrodt's *De Aeschyli re scenica* (in *Scenica*, Berlin, 1876). On the actors in the Greek drama, their costume, style, and mode of delivery: Grysar, *De Graecorum tragoedia*, &c. (Cöln, 1830); K. F. Hermann, *De distributione personarum inter histriones in tragoediis graecis* (Marburg, 1840); Beer, *Ueber die Zahl der Schauspieler bei Aristophanes* (Leipzig, 1844); Sommerbrodt's two articles *De Histrionibus* and *De Arte Histrionum*, in his *Scenica*; Wieseler's *Das Satyrspiel* (Göttingen, 1848); Dierk's two dissertations, *De tragicorum histrionum habitu scaenico apud Graecos* (Göttingen, 1883), *Ueber das Costüm der griechischen Schauspieler in der alten Komödie* (*Archaeol. Zeitung*, xliii); Christ's *Metrik der Griechen und Römer* (Leipzig, 1879). On the subject of the chorus: K. O. Müller's *Dissertations on the Eumenides* (Engl. transl., London, 1853); G. Hermann's *De choro Eumenidum* (Opusc. ii. p. 129 ff.); Schultze's *De chori Graecorum tragici habitu externo* (Berlin, 1857); Sommerbrodt's *De chori tragici principibus*, in *Scenica*; and Arnoldt's *Die Chorpartieen bei Aristophanes* (Leipzig, 1873).



In conclusion I wish to express my obligations to Professor Gardner for his assistance in various questions connected with archaeology, and to Mr. Evelyn Abbott for many valuable suggestions and criticisms. I have to thank the Council of the Hellenic Society for their permission to reproduce the illustration of a chorus of birds from the *Hellenic Journal*. I desire at the same time to acknowledge the great courtesy with which Dr. Dörpfeld, of the German Archaeological Institute, has supplied me with the latest information concerning his excavations in the theatre of Dionysus, and his views on Greek theatres in general.

OXFORD, *June*, 1889.

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## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

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SINCE the first edition of this book was published many important additions have been made to our knowledge of the Greek stage. Various theatres have been excavated for the first time; fresh inscriptions have been discovered; and the evidence of the ancient authorities has been examined and sifted with the minutest care. The effect has been to throw a new light on many points which were previously obscure. In order to incorporate these results in the present edition, it was found necessary to make considerable alterations in the book. The third and fourth chapters—those dealing with the Theatre and the Scenery—have been entirely re-written. The first chapter, on the Dramatic Contests at Athens, has been re-written in parts. The other chapters have been carefully revised throughout, and numerous corrections and additions have been inserted, especially on such subjects as the choregia, the theoric fund, the theatre-tickets, and the costume of the actors and the chorus. Eleven new illustrations have been

added. The old ones have been mostly retained, with the exception of the ground-plan and the two views of the theatre at Athens, which have been replaced by more accurate representations.

The number of books, treatises, and articles which have been written on the subject during the last few years is so great that it would be impossible to mention them all. I propose in the following list to specify only those which I have found most useful, and to which I am chiefly indebted. Many others will be referred to in the notes. The most important work of recent years on the Greek theatre is Dörpfeld and Reisch's *Das griechische Theater* (Athens, 1896). The admirable and exhaustive account of the Theatre of Dionysus at Athens, which is given in this book, has superseded all previous descriptions. Dörpfeld appears to have now proved conclusively that the stone theatre at Athens was not earlier than the fourth century B.C., and his views on this subject have been followed in the present edition. The book also contains a valuable summary of the chief points of interest in other theatres recently excavated, and a complete exposition of Dörpfeld's theory about the Greek stage. Some further developments and modifications of this theory will be found in two articles lately published by Dörpfeld in the *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*, 1896, p. 563 ff., and in *Athenische Mittheilungen*, 1897, p. 439 ff. After reading through Dörpfeld's arguments, and those of other scholars who support his views, I am still of opinion that the old theory is the right one, and that the Greek actors performed on a stage from the first; though no doubt the stage of the fifth century was much lower than that of later times. Among other writings which deal with the subject of the Greek theatre as a whole I may mention the following:—Oehmichen, *Das Bühnenwesen der Griechen und Römer*, München, 1890; Navarre, *Dionysos*, Paris, 1895 (a lucid and well-written summary); the valuable articles by Prof. Jebb in Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities* (v. *Theatrum*), and by Prof. P. Gardner in Jevons and Gardner's *Manual of Greek and Roman Antiquities*; and Bethe's *Prolegomena zur Geschichte*

*des Theaters im Alterthum*, Leipzig, 1896. This last book, though often rather fanciful in its conclusions, is full of useful information and interesting suggestions.

To turn to the treatises on special portions of the subject. The point which has been most discussed in recent years is the question of the stage. The following are among the more important articles which have been written in favour of Dörpfeld's views:—White, *The Stage in Aristophanes* (*Harvard Studies*, ii. pp. 159–205); Bodensteiner, *Scenische Fragen im griechischen Drama* (Leipzig, 1893); Capps, *The Chorus in the later Greek Drama* (*American Journal of Archaeology*, x. 3. pp. 287–325), *The Stage in the Greek Theatre* (New Haven, 1891), *Vitruvius and the Greek Stage* (*Studies in Classical Philology*, Chicago, 1893, p. 3 ff.). The opposite side of the question has been defended by Todt, *Noch einmal die Bühne des Aeschylus* (*Philologus*, 1889, p. 505 ff.); Curtius, *Orchestra und Bühne* (*Berliner Philolog. Wochenschrift*, 1893, p. 97 ff.); Prof. E. Gardner, *A Plea for Vitruvius* (*Supplementary Papers of the Hellenic Journal*, 1892, p. 92 ff.); Lechat, *Épidaure* (Paris, 1895, p. 215 ff.); Zacher, *Die erhöhte Bühne bei Aristophanes* (*Philologus*, 1896, p. 181 ff.); Chamondard, *Bulletin de Corr. Hellénique*, 1896, p. 294 ff. (an admirable criticism); and also in various reviews of Dörpfeld's book, and especially by Bethe (*Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen*, 1897, pp. 701–728), and by A. Müller (*Berl. Philolog. Wochenschrift*, 1897, pp. 1121–1131). Special views, which may be regarded as a sort of compromise between the ordinary theory and that of Dörpfeld, are advocated by Weismann in *Die scenische Aufführung der griechischen Dramen* (München, 1893), *Zur Thymele-frage* (*Jahrb. für classische Philologie*, 1895, pp. 673–679), *Scenische Anweisungen, &c.* (Bamberg, 1896); and by Christ in *Jahrb. für classische Philologie*, 1894, p. 27 ff., p. 157 ff., and *Sitzungsberichte der bayer. Akad. der Wissenschaften*, 1894, pp. 1–52. All these articles, together with others which might be mentioned, have been of great service in the preparation of the present edition. Opinions may differ as to the soundness of the views which they respectively advocate. But there can be no doubt that this exhaustive

discussion of the subject has brought to light many new facts, and cleared up many difficulties.

As regards the theatres which have been recently explored and excavated, I have consulted (in addition to Dörpfeld's book) the following sources:—Hermann, Bohn, and Fränkel, *Ausgrabungen zu Pergamon*, Berlin, 1888, p. 40 ff. (theatre at Pergamon); *Athen. Mittheilungen*, 1894, p. 65 ff. (theatre at Magnesia); *Papers of the American School of Archaeological Studies at Athens*, 1888, pp. 1-34 (Thoricus); *American Journal of Archaeology*, 1891, p. 253 ff., 1895, p. 331 ff. (Eretria); *Ibid.* 1889, p. 267 ff., 1893, p. 388 ff. (Sicyon); Defrasse and Lechat, *Épidaure*, Paris, 1895 (Epidaurus); Schultz, Gardner, and Loring in *Excavations at Megalopolis, Supplement to Hellenic Journal*, 1892 (Megalopolis); Chamonard, *Bulletin de Corr. Hellénique*, 1896, p. 256 ff. (Delos); *Athen. Mittheilungen*, 1893, p. 404 ff. (Tralles); Lanckoronski, *Städte Pamphyliens und Pisidiens*, Wien, 1892 (contains a very valuable account, with excellent plans and illustrations, of certain Asia Minor theatres hitherto but little known); Schrader, *Berl. Philolog. Wochenschrift*, April 16, 1898, pp. 508, 509 (a brief preliminary notice of the interesting theatre at Priene, lately excavated).

The subject of the choregic arrangements has been ably treated by Capps in his *Dramatic Synchoregia at Athens* (*American Journal of Philology*, xvii. 3. pp. 319-328), which I have followed in most points. For certain questions connected with the Dionysiac festivals I have consulted with advantage Körte's article *Zu Dionysos-Festen* (*Rhein. Museum*, 1897, pp. 168-174), and Wachsmuth, *Das Thukydideische Urathen* (*Abhandl. der Sächs. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, xviii. pp. 1-56). As for the costume of actors and chorus, the most valuable and instructive of recent treatises are Körtes *Studien zur alten Komödie* (*Jahrb. des archaeol. Instituts*, 1893, pp. 61-93), and his articles in *Athen. Mittheilungen*, 1894, p. 346 ff., and in Bethe's *Prolegomena*, p. 339 ff.; Crusius, in *Philologus*, xlviii. p. 696 ff.; Poppelreuter, *De Comoediae Atticae Primordiis*, Berlin, 1893; Loeschke, *Athen. Mittheilungen*, 1894, p. 519 ff.; and Bethe's *Prolegomena*, p. 35 ff. Other articles on special points

from which I have taken various suggestions are—Neckel, *Das Ekkyklema* (Friedland, 1890); Cook, *The Thymele in Greek Theatres* (*Classical Review*, Oct. 1895); Reisch, *Griechische Weihgeschenke* (Wien, 1890); and Svoronos, *Περὶ τῶν Εἰσιτηρίων* (*Journal International d'Archéologie Numismatique*, 1898, i. pp. 37-120). I should also mention Albert Müller's *Die neueren Arbeiten auf dem Gebiete des griech. Bühnenwesens* (*Philologus*, Suppl. vi. 1891)—an interesting and judicious criticism of the various writings about the Greek stage which had appeared shortly before the publication of the article.

It will be seen that many of the authorities mentioned in the preface to the first edition have been superseded, at any rate in part, by these more recent investigations. But I have thought it best to reprint the earlier list, since there are few of the old authorities which are not still worth consulting on some point or another.

I gladly take this opportunity of expressing my obligations to various friends for the corrections and suggestions which they have sent to me. I have derived many valuable hints from the reviews and notices of the first edition, and especially from the very friendly and useful criticism by Mr. L. C. Purser in *Hermathena*, and from that by Mr. H. Richards in the *Academy*. I am greatly indebted to Professor E. Gardner for the photograph of the Epidaurian theatre which is reproduced in Fig. 7; and to the Council of the Hellenic Society for their permission to copy from the *Hellenic Journal* the illustration of a satyric chorus. I have to thank the Provost of Oriel, Professor P. Gardner, Mr. F. Madan, Rev. G. C. Richards, and other friends for their help and advice in various matters; and Dr. Albert Müller, Professor White, and Mr. Capps for their kindness in sending me writings of theirs on the subject of the Greek stage which have proved of very great service.

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# THE ATTIC THEATRE

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## CHAPTER I

### DRAMATIC CONTESTS AT ATHENS

#### § 1. *General Characteristics of the Attic drama*

THE ancient Athenian drama was in many respects unlike any kind of dramatic performance that we are accustomed to in modern times. The difference extended not only to the character of the plays themselves, and the manner in which they were presented upon the stage, but also to the circumstances under which the production took place. In order to form an accurate conception of the external features of the old Greek drama it will be necessary to dismiss from the mind many of the associations with which the modern stage is connected. In the first place, the luxury of having theatrical entertainments at every season of the year was a thing never heard of among the ancient Athenians. The dramatic performances at Athens, instead of being spread over the whole year, were confined within very limited periods. They were practically restricted to the two great festivals of Dionysus, the Lenaea and the City Dionysia. It is true that at these festivals the number of plays exhibited was large enough to satisfy the most enthusiastic playgoer. Several days in succession were devoted entirely to the drama, and on each day tragedies and

comedies followed one another without intermission from morning till evening. But with the exception of these two festivals, and certain contests in acting at the Anthesteria, there was no other occasion on which plays were performed in the Athenian theatre. There were dramatic exhibitions in the various townships of Attica during the Rural Dionysia; but in Athens itself the drama was restricted to the periods already mentioned. In fact, as far as regards the time and duration of the performances, the ancient drama had much in common with the modern musical festival, in which at certain fixed seasons several days in succession are given up entirely to music.

Another vital point of difference lay in the fact that the ancient drama was managed wholly by the state. To provide for the amusement of the people was considered to be one of the regular duties of the government. In England theatres are simply private enterprises. In some foreign countries certain theatres receive subventions from the state, and are subject to a code of rules; but for practical purposes their connexion with the state is only a slight one. But in Athens the superintendence of the annual dramatic performances was just as much a part of the public administration of affairs as was the repair of the dockyards, the equipment of fleets, or the despatch of armies. Poets and actors were both selected by the state. The cost of the performance was a tax upon the richer classes. Every wealthy citizen had in his turn to defray the expenses of a tragedy or a comedy, just as he had to pay for one of the ships of the fleet, or perform any other of the state burdens. The theatre was a public institution for the benefit of the whole people. Every Athenian citizen of whatever degree was entitled to be present at the annual dramatic performances; and if he was too poor to pay the entrance fee, he received the price of admission from the state.

The audience consisted practically of the whole body of the people. In a modern theatre, owing to its limited dimensions, the spectators are few in number, and have no representative character about them. But the theatre of Dionysus at Athens was capable of containing nearly twenty thousand people. Every

Athenian attended the performances at the Dionysia as a matter of course. The audience therefore to which the Athenian dramatic poet addressed himself was in reality a gathering of the whole body of his fellow-countrymen. In those days books were not plentiful, and their use was confined to a limited class. The ordinary Athenian depended for his literary pleasures upon the various public performances and recitations of poetical compositions. The drama was therefore much more to him than to a modern playgoer. At the present day, when continual supplies of fresh literature are accessible to every one, it is hard to realise the excitement and expectancy with which an Athenian looked forward to the annual exhibition of dramas at the Dionysia. It was here that his taste for novelty in literature was gratified. It was here that he found an equivalent for the books, magazines, and newspapers of modern civilization. Hence he was able to sit day after day, from morning to evening, listening to tragedy and comedy, without any feeling of satiety. The enthusiasm with which the drama was generally regarded, and the direct manner in which the author was brought into contact with the whole body of his countrymen, contributed to make the vocation of the dramatic writer one of the very greatest importance. The leading tragic poets especially are known to have exercised a most profound influence upon the national mind and character. They were spoken of as the teachers of the people. Their writings were invested with a sort of Homeric sanctity, and appealed to as authorities upon questions of science and morality. Maxims and quotations from their plays were upon every one's lips. Many passages in Plato and Aristophanes prove the enormous influence for good and evil which was exercised by the Greek tragic poets, and there is probably no other instance in history of a drama which was so thoroughly popular, and formed such an essential part of the national life<sup>1</sup>.

Another prominent characteristic of the Attic stage, which distinguishes it from that of modern times, was the fact that almost every dramatic performance took the form of a contest.

<sup>1</sup> See especially Plat. Rep. 598 D, E; Aristoph. Ran. 1008 ff., 1054 ff.

In the best period of the Greek drama the production of a play by itself, as a mere exhibition, was a thing unknown. In later times celebrated plays by the great dramatists were sometimes exhibited alone. But in the period covered by the names of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, the only mode of exhibiting plays was by competing in the dramatic contests at the festivals of Dionysus. Prizes were offered by the state. A limited number of poets, after careful selection by the state, were allowed to take part in the competition. The result was decided by a jury publicly appointed. It is curious to notice how strongly implanted in the Greek nature was this passion for anything in the shape of a contest. It is seen in the case of most branches of poetry and music. Dithyrambs were generally produced in competitions at festivals between rival poets and choruses. Recitations of the old epic poems took the form of contests between rhapsodists. Public performances on flute and harp were mostly of the same character. There can be no doubt that the stimulus of rivalry and competition had a considerable effect upon the genius of the poets. It is remarkable in how many instances the Athenian dramatic writers retained the full vigour of their intellect even in extreme old age. For example, the tragedies composed in their latest years by the three great tragic poets show not the slightest symptoms of decaying power. The *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, one of the most splendid products of the Greek drama, was brought out shortly before the poet's death. The *Oedipus Coloneus* of Sophocles and the *Bacchae* of Euripides were both written very late in life. This extraordinary vitality was no doubt partly due to the excitement caused by the public competitions in the theatre, which acted as a stimulus to the mind, and prevented that decay of power which usually accompanies old age.

But the most conspicuous difference between the ancient and modern drama lay in the essentially religious character of the former. The Athenian drama was not only an amusement for the people: it was also part of a great religious celebration. Throughout its history it never ceased to be closely connected with the religion of the state. It was developed originally out

of the songs and hymns in honour of Dionysus, the god of wine. In latertimes its range was widened, and its tone secularised: but it continued to be performed solely at the festivals of Dionysus. Together with the other contests and ceremonials it was regarded as a celebration in honour of the god. The spectator who sat watching a tragedy or a comedy was not merely providing for his own amusement, but was also joining in an act of worship. Many facts tend to show the sacred character of the festivals of Dionysus, and the performances which accompanied them. The festivals themselves were not mere human institutions, but were established in obedience to the direct commands of the oracle. On these occasions the whole city gave itself up to pleasure, and to the worship of the genial wine-god. For the time being there was an end of business and litigation. Peace and harmony were supposed to prevail universally, and nothing was allowed to disturb the general enjoyment. Distrains for debt were forbidden by law during the continuance of the festival. Prisoners were temporarily released from gaol, to enable them to join in the worship of the god. Assaults and outrages, if committed during the Dionysia, were regarded as offences against religion, and were punished with the utmost severity. The ordinary course of law was not considered sufficient, and they were dealt with under an exceptional process at a special meeting of the Assembly. As a proof of the indignation which was aroused by such violations of the harmony of the festival it is recorded that on one occasion a certain Ctesicles was put to death for merely striking a personal enemy during the procession. To preserve the sanctity of the festival from contamination, no person suffering from civil disability was allowed to take part in a chorus at the Dionysia, or even to superintend the training of it<sup>1</sup>. The performances in the theatre, being the most conspicuous part of the proceedings at the festival, were equally sacred in character. The god Dionysus was supposed to be present in person to witness and enjoy them; and this belief was symbolised by the curious

<sup>1</sup> Dem. Meid. §§ 8-10, 51-53, 58-60, 180; Androt. § 68, and schol. ad loc.

custom of placing his statue in the orchestra, where it remained throughout the whole of the festal period<sup>1</sup>. Most of the front seats in the theatre were given up to the priests of the different deities. In the centre of the front row, and in the best seat of all, sat the priest of Dionysus, presiding over the celebrations in honour of the god<sup>2</sup>. The theatre itself was regarded as a temple of Dionysus, and possessed all the sanctity attaching to such a place. Any form of insult committed there during the Dionysia was doubly criminal. Merely to eject a man from a seat he had taken wrongfully was a piece of sacrilege punishable with death. The people who took part in the different contests, the poets, choregi, actors, and singers, were regarded as ministers of the god Dionysus. Their persons and dresses were sacred. To strike a choregus in the theatre, as Meidias struck Demosthenes, was an offence against religion and the gods<sup>3</sup>. In order to understand the outward character and surroundings of the old Greek drama it is most essential to realise the fact that the whole proceedings were part of a religious celebration, and were intended to be an act of homage to the god, as well as an amusement for the people.

## § 2. *First institution of dramatic competitions.*

The establishment of the regular dramatic contests at Athens belongs to that period in which tragedy and comedy were beginning to acquire artistic shape and stability. During the early stages in the development of the drama there were not as yet any public competitions. The first rude innovations upon the old hymns to Dionysus were mere tentative experiments by individuals, exhibited upon their own responsibility. Tragedy is said to have been introduced into Athens by Thespis. But it is expressly stated that his exhibitions of the new form of art were given at first as a private enterprise, and that he appeared without any rival or competitor<sup>4</sup>. Comedy, in the same way, as

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iii. 240-384. Hesych. *v. νεμήσεις θέας*.

<sup>3</sup> Dem. Meid. §§ 55, 58-60, 178.

<sup>4</sup> Plut. Solon p. 95 B *ἀρχομένων δὲ*

*τῶν περὶ Θέσπιν ἤδη τὴν τραγῳδίαν κινεῖν, καὶ διὰ τὴν καινότητα τοὺς πολλοὺς ἄγοντος τοῦ πράγματος, οὕτω δὲ εἰς ἄμεινον ἐναγωνίον ἐξηγμένου κ.τ.λ.*

we learn from Aristotle, remained without recognition from the state until a comparatively late period, being kept up solely by voluntary efforts, and regarded as of little importance<sup>1</sup>. It was not until the popularity of the drama had been firmly established, that it was adopted as a regular form of public entertainment, its management entrusted to the state, and annual contests established. The date of the first institution of these contests cannot be determined in every case with certainty; but there is sufficient evidence to show that none of them were earlier than the latter half of the sixth century.

These public competitions, like the private performances which preceded them, were held at the various festivals of Dionysus. The Greek drama was essentially an offshoot of the worship of Dionysus, and throughout its history, as far as Athens was concerned, it continued to retain its close connexion with that worship. In other parts of Greece, when the drama had been universally adopted as a form of art, dramatic exhibitions were occasionally introduced into festivals with which originally they had no connexion<sup>2</sup>. Thus they were introduced in later times into the Pythian games<sup>3</sup>. But the Athenians were more conservative, and confined their drama to the Dionysiac festivals. Those in Attica were of four kinds. There were the Rural Dionysia, celebrated in the different Attic demes; and there were also the three Athenian festivals, the Anthesteria, the Great or City Dionysia, and the Lenaea. An attempt was made some years ago to prove that the number of these festivals should properly be reduced to two: that the Lenaea was only a part of the Anthesteria, and that the Anthesteria was only the Athenian counterpart of the Rural Dionysia<sup>4</sup>. This theory, though successfully refuted at the time, has been revived once more by Dörpfeld<sup>5</sup>. But the recent discovery of additional evidence from an old inscrip-

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. Poet. c. 5.

<sup>2</sup> See the Tragic Drama of the Greeks, p. 436.

<sup>3</sup> Plut. Quaest. Symp. p. 674 D.

<sup>4</sup> Gilbert, Die Festzeiten der atti-

schen Dionysien, 1872. The theory was refuted by Schömann, Alterth. ii. 579-599.

<sup>5</sup> Das griechische Theater, p. 9.

tion appears to show conclusively that the old opinion was the correct one, and that the four festivals were independent of one another<sup>1</sup>.

The importance of these festivals, from the theatrical point of view, differed considerably. As regards the Anthesteria, its connexion with the drama was never more than a very slight one. The Rural Dionysia, though the scene of much dramatic activity, were mere local celebrations, of no great interest as compared with those held in Athens. The really important festivals in the history of the Greek theatre were the City Dionysia and the Lenaea. It was at these meetings that the Attic drama was brought to perfection in the course of the fifth century. At the same time there is a difference to be observed between the dramatic character of the two festivals. At the City Dionysia the most prominent feature was the performance of tragedies; comedy held a subordinate position. At the Lenaea the situation was reversed; the comedies formed the chief glory of the festival, while tragedy appears to have been a later appendage. These facts are proved by various indications. The law of Euegorus, in enumerating the proceedings at the City Dionysia, places tragedy at the end of the series, as being the most important. But in the list of the proceedings at the Lenaea it places comedy last, obviously because comedy was the principal attraction<sup>2</sup>. Again, when the contest between comic actors was instituted side by side with that between the comic poets, this competition was confined at first to the Lenaea, and was only extended in much later times to the City Dionysia. There is also the fact that the dithyramb, the original germ of tragedy, was always a conspicuous element in the City Dionysia,

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 834 b—an account of the sums expended by the *ἐπιστάται* 'Ελευσινόθεν in 329–328 B.C. In col. ii. 46 we read *ἐπιστάταις ἐπιλήναια εἰς Διονύσια θῆναι* ΔΔ: in ii. 68 *εἰς Χῶας δημοσίοις ἱερεῖον κ.τ.λ.* Thus there must have been a considerable difference of time between the Lenaea and the Anthesteria. The adjective *ἐπιλήναιος* is a later variety for the ordinary *ἐπὶ*

*Ληναιῶν*. It confirms the reading of the papyrus in Athen. Pol. c. 57 (*Διονυσίων τῶν ἐπιλήναιων*, altered by all the editors into *τῶν ἐπὶ Ληναιῶν*). The significance of the above inscription has been first pointed out by Wachsmuth, Abhandl. der Sächs. Gesell. der Wissenschaften, xviii, p. 33 foll.; and by Körte, Rhein. Mus. 1897, p. 168 foll.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. Meid. § 10.



while unknown at the Lenaea during the classic period<sup>1</sup>. The characteristic qualities of the two festivals—the preference of the one for tragedy and of the other for comedy—are probably to be ascribed to some original difference in the cult of the two deities, Dionysus Eleuthereus and Dionysus Lenaeus, in whose honour they were respectively celebrated.

### § 3. *The City Dionysia.*

The City Dionysia, the feast of Dionysus Eleuthereus<sup>2</sup>, was far the most splendid of the Bacchic festivals, and was therefore also called the Great Dionysia, or simply the Dionysia, without any additional epithet<sup>3</sup>. It was held from the first within the precincts of the city, in the sacred enclosure of Eleuthereus on the south of the Acropolis, where the remains of the great Athenian theatre are still to be seen<sup>4</sup>. Hence the origin of the name City Dionysia, to distinguish it from the Anthesteria and the Lenaea, which were celebrated, at any rate during the earliest period, in a district outside the walls. For the same reason a victory at the City Dionysia was described as a victory 'in the city.'<sup>5</sup> The date of the festival can be fixed with a fair amount of certainty. It took place in Elaphebolion, a month which answers to the last half of March and the first half of April. It must have terminated on the 15th, and begun on the 10th or 11th<sup>6</sup>. It could hardly have lasted less than five

<sup>1</sup> See chap. i, §§ 3, 9, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Paus. i. 29; Philostrate. Vit. Soph. p. 549.

<sup>3</sup> Διονύσια τὰ ἐν ᾄστει Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 341, 402, 404; Διονύσια τὰ ἀστικά Thuc. v. 20; Διονύσια τὰ μεγάλα Athen. Pol. c. 56, Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 312, 331; Διονύσια Athen. Pol. c. 56.

<sup>4</sup> That the enclosure was sacred to Dionysus Eleuthereus is proved by the inscription on the chief seat in the theatre (ἱερέως Διονύσου Ἐλευθερέως Corp. Ins. Att. iii. 240).

<sup>5</sup> νίκη ἀστική Diog. Laert. viii. 90. To produce plays at the City Dionysia was ἐν ᾄστει διδάσκειν Schol. Aristoph.

Ran. 67, or εἰς ᾄστν καθίεναι Arg. ii. Aristoph. Aves. The play or plays so produced were διδασκαλία ἀστική Plut. X orat. 839 D.

<sup>6</sup> This is proved by certain passages in Aeschines and Demosthenes. After the City Dionysia came the Pandia; next day was the ἐκκλησία ἐν Διονύσου; then followed the 18th of Elaphebolion, the day of the first assembly mentioned by Aeschines and Demosthenes. Hence the City Dionysia must have terminated on the 15th. See Aeschin. Ctesiph. § 68, Fals. Leg. § 61; Demosth. Meid. § 8. The feast of Asclepius and the Proagon were on the 8th, Aeschin.

days. The long series of performances and celebrations which had to be gone through could not have been packed into a smaller space of time. Whether it extended to six days is a point that cannot be determined.

Before proceeding to describe the dramatic part of the performances at the City Dionysia it may be as well first of all to collect together such information as is attainable concerning the general character of the festival. It was held at a time of year when the spring was just commencing, and the sea had again become navigable. Occasionally stormy weather interfered with the proceedings. In the time of Demetrius the procession through the city was prevented by a heavy fall of snow. But the winter was generally at an end<sup>1</sup>. The city was full of visitors from all parts of Greece. During the period of Athenian supremacy it was at this season of the year that the allies came to Athens to pay the annual tribute. Ambassadors frequently chose this time for the transaction of public business. There were also the crowds of visitors who were attracted to Athens merely from a desire to see the splendours of the festival. The consequence was that the streets were thronged with strangers, and the city presented an animated appearance in marked contrast to the quietness of the winter festival of the Lenaea<sup>2</sup>. The Athenians were glad of the opportunity of displaying the magnificence of their city before such a vast concourse of foreign Greeks. The various religious ceremonies, the sacrifices to the gods, the dithyrambs, the tragedies, and the comedies were all calculated to impress strangers with the wealth and public spirit and literary taste of the Athenians. In addition to the ordinary proceedings of the festival one or two ceremonies of a striking character were introduced for the express purpose of emphasising the power of Athens in the eyes of the visitors. At the commencement of the performances in the theatre the tribute collected from the allies was solemnly

Ctesiph. § 67. But the Proagon took place 'a few days' before the City Dionysia, Schol. Aeschin. Ctesiph. § 67. The City Dionysia cannot therefore have begun before the roth.

<sup>1</sup> Theophrast. Char. 3; Plut. Demetr. p. 894 B.

<sup>2</sup> Aristoph. Achar. 505, 506; Thucyd. v. 23.

deposited in the orchestra in the presence of the assembled multitude. On the same occasion the herald made an announcement concerning the crowns which had been bestowed by foreign states upon Athens or upon Athenian citizens, and the crowns themselves were brought forward and laid in the orchestra beside the tribute<sup>1</sup>. By scenes of this kind the festival was made an occasion for glorifying Athens in the presence of foreign Greeks. In the fourth century, after the fall of the Athenian Empire, the political splendour of the City Dionysia came to an end. But the magnificence of the spectacle and the vastness of the gathering do not seem to have been in any way diminished. Visitors were attracted from all parts of Greece, not by political business, but by the celebrity of the dramatic exhibitions. Demosthenes speaks of the 'multitudes of strangers' who were present, and Aeschines describes the audience at the City Dionysia as consisting of 'the whole Greek nation<sup>2</sup>.' Though Athens was shorn of her political power, the crowds which continued to attend the festival testified to her unimpaired supremacy in art and literature.

On the first day of the festival there was a grand religious procession, in which the ancient statue of Dionysus Eleuthereus was carried through the streets with great pomp and ceremony<sup>3</sup>. This statue, according to tradition, belonged originally to the people of Eleutherae, a border town between Attica and Boeotia; but had been afterwards transferred to Athens, and placed in the sanctuary at the foot of the Acropolis. The procession was instituted to commemorate this sacred event, and to symbolise the introduction of the new cult. Every year, at the commencement of the festival, the image was taken out of its shrine, and carried solemnly along the road to Eleutherae as far as a certain temple near the Academy. On its return it followed the very same road which it had formerly

<sup>1</sup> Isocrat. orat. viii. § 82; Aeschin. Ctesiph. §§ 32-48.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. Meid. § 74; Aeschin. Ctesiph. § 43.

<sup>3</sup> The procession must have been on the first day, for (1) in Dem. Meid. § 10,

it comes first in the list of proceedings, (2) it was not till after the procession was over that the statue was placed in the theatre to witness the dramatic and dithyrambic contests.

traversed, when making its first entrance into Athens<sup>1</sup>. The procession was one of the most brilliant spectacles at the City Dionysia. Athenians of every class, men, women, and even girls, made a point of being present to witness or take part in it. Vast crowds filled the streets; and the casual encounters which took place on these occasions often served as a foundation to the plots of the New Comedy<sup>2</sup>. The members of the procession wore brilliantly-coloured garments and ornaments of gold. Many of them had their faces covered with masks. Some were in chariots; others walked on foot<sup>3</sup>. Conspicuous among the train of people were the canephoroi, young virgins bearing upon their heads the baskets containing the sacrificial implements; and the ephebi, with their shields and lances, who acted as an escort to the statue<sup>4</sup>. The choregi to the different choruses were also expected to attend. Demosthenes, when he was choregus, had a golden crown and mantle made specially for use at the procession; and Alcibiades on a similar occasion was dressed in purple, and excited much admiration by his beauty<sup>5</sup>. It is not improbable that the performers in the various lyric and dramatic competitions likewise joined in the ceremony. Part of the show consisted of the train of victims which were to be sacrificed to Dionysus. Many of these were publicly provided by the state, and many others were offered by individuals, or by different classes of the population<sup>6</sup>. The long succession of varied groups and figures, the brilliant colours, the vast crowds of spectators, and the splendid public buildings of Athens in the background, must have combined to form a spectacle of great magnificence.

The route followed by the procession led through the marketplace, where a halt was made, and a chorus danced and sung in front of the statues of the twelve gods<sup>7</sup>. Then came the march through the city gates along the road to the Academy. When the temple was reached, the statue of the god was placed

<sup>1</sup> Paus. i. 29. 2, 38. 8; Philostrat. Vit. Soph. p. 549.

<sup>2</sup> Menand. Frag. Incert. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Plut. Cupid. Divit. 527 E.

<sup>4</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 420, 470, 471.

<sup>5</sup> Dem. Meid. § 22; Athen. 534 C.

<sup>6</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 471, 741.

<sup>7</sup> Xen. Hipparch. iii. 2.

upon a pedestal, and the various victims were sacrificed. The rest of the day was spent in feasting and rejoicing<sup>1</sup>. At night-fall the procession returned to Athens by torchlight. But the sacred image, instead of being restored to its sanctuary, was conveyed to the theatre by the ephebi, and placed in the orchestra, in full view of the stage. Here it remained during the rest of the festival, so that the god might enjoy the approaching exhibitions as well as his worshippers<sup>2</sup>. This curious ceremony, of which the existence has only lately been discovered from inscriptions, throws an interesting light on many passages in ancient authors. It gives an additional point to the selection of Dionysus in the Frogs as the most experienced and representative of dramatic critics. It explains the proposal of Aristophanes, that his rival Cratinus should not attempt authorship any longer, but should turn spectator, and sit comfortably in the theatre 'by the side of Dionysus<sup>3</sup>.' And, finally, it enables us to understand the denunciations of those later writers who, referring to the gladiatorial combats in the Athenian theatre, protest against the practice of shedding human blood in the very orchestra which the god Dionysus occasionally visits<sup>4</sup>.

The entertainments provided in the theatre during the City Dionysia were of two kinds. In the first place there were the dramatic competitions, at which tragedies, comedies, and satyric dramas were exhibited. In the second place there were the choral competitions, which consisted of performances of dithyrambs to the accompaniment of the flute<sup>5</sup>. It is important not to confuse together the details of these two classes of contest.

<sup>1</sup> Philostrat. Vit. Soph. p. 549.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 470, 471.

<sup>3</sup> Equit. 536 θέσθαι λιπαρὸν παρὰ τῷ Διονύσῳ. The emendation τῷ Διονύσου (sc. ἱερῷ) appears to be unnecessary.

<sup>4</sup> Philostrat. Vit. Apoll. p. 161. Dion Chrysostom, orat. 31 (631 R).

<sup>5</sup> In the lists of victors at the City Dionysia (Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 971 a-e, iv. 971 f-h) the contests enumerated are always the same, viz. παιδων, ἀνδρῶν, κομφιδῶν, τραγῳδῶν. Cp. Athen. Pol.

c. 56 χορηγούς τραγῳδοῖς καθίστησι τρεῖς . . . ἔπειτα παραλαβὼν τοὺς χορηγούς τοὺς ἐννεγεμένους ὑπὸ τῶν φυλῶν εἰς Διονύσια ἀνδράσιν καὶ παῖσιν καὶ κομφιδῶν κ. τ. λ. Dem. Meid. § 10 καὶ τοῖς ἐν ἄστει Διονυσίοις ἢ πομπῇ καὶ οἱ παῖδες [καὶ οἱ ἄνδρες] καὶ ὁ κῶμος καὶ οἱ κομφιδῶν καὶ οἱ τραγῳδοί. Here the words καὶ οἱ ἄνδρες have obviously fallen out. Cp. also Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 553 (list of victors παῖσιν ἢ ἀνδράσιν at the City Dionysia).

Even in recent works upon the Greek drama many mistakes have been caused by filling out the description of the dramatic performances with facts and circumstances which had really nothing to do with them, but applied solely to the choral competitions. At the City Dionysia there were two of these choral competitions, one between choruses of boys, and the other between choruses of men<sup>1</sup>. The choruses were called cyclic choruses, because of the circular form in which they stood. Each of them was composed of fifty members. There were five choruses of boys and five choruses of men, and each chorus was supplied by one of the ten tribes of Attica. In this way all ten tribes took part in one or other of the two competitions<sup>2</sup>. The important point to remember in regard to these dithyrambic choruses is that the contest in which they were engaged was essentially a tribal one. In the dramatic competitions the rivalry was confined to the individual poets and choregi. Both choruses and choregi were selected indiscriminately from the whole population<sup>3</sup>. But each dithyrambic chorus represented one of the ten tribes. Its choregus was a member of that tribe. The singers were exclusively chosen from the same tribe<sup>4</sup>. The victory of the chorus was a victory for the tribe to which it belonged. The prize of victory, the tripod, though presented to the choregus, and erected in some public place at his expense, was regarded as appertaining equally to the tribe<sup>5</sup>. In the

<sup>1</sup> παίδων χοροί, ἀνδρῶν χοροί. See the previous note.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. Aeschin. Timarch. § 11 ἐξ ἑθους Ἀθηναῖοι [κατέστησαν] κατὰ φυλὴν πεντήκοντα παίδων χορὸν ἢ ἀνδρῶν, ὥστε γενέσθαι δέκα χορούς, ἐπειδὴ (δὲ) καὶ δέκα φυλαί. λέγονται δὲ οἱ διθύραμβοι χοροὶ κύκλιοι, καὶ χορὸς κύκλιος. A chorus of men is called rather loosely ἀλλήται ἄνδρες by Demosthenes (Meid. § 156), not because it consisted of flute-players, but because it sang dithyrambs to the accompaniment of the flute. This is made clear by other passages in the speech, e.g. §§ 15, 17. See Wieseler das Satyrspiel, pp. 46-48. Misled by the phrase the author of the first argument to the Meidias erroneously asserts

that there were ἀλλήτων χοροί at the City Dionysia.

<sup>3</sup> In the time of Aristotle the choregi in comedy were appointed by the tribes. But this was a late innovation, and produced no change in the character of the contest. See chap. ii, § 2.

<sup>4</sup> Demosth. Meid. § 13; Antiphon orat. vi. §§ 12, 13.

<sup>5</sup> Lysias orat. xxi. § 2; Demosth. Meid. § 5 τῆς φυλῆς ἀδικῶς ἀφαιρέσεως τὸν τρίποδα. The choregus to a dithyrambic chorus was said χορηγεῖν τῇ φυλῇ, since he represented his tribe in the contest, while the dramatic choregus represented no one but himself; cp. Plut. X orat. 835 B ἐχορηγήσῃ κυκλίῳ χορῷ τῇ αὐτοῦ φυλῇ ἀγων-

records of victories with dithyrambic choruses, preserved on inscriptions and elsewhere, the name of the tribe to which the chorus belonged is always given in a prominent position. On the other hand the records of dramatic victories give merely the names of the choregus, the poet, and the principal actor. There is no mention of any tribe<sup>1</sup>. It follows that the tribes had nothing to do with the dramatic contests.

#### § 4. *Tragedy at the City Dionysia in early times.*

We now come to the dramatic performances at the City Dionysia. Of these the tragic, as we have already seen, were far the most important. The City Dionysia was the principal home of the tragic drama, and it was here that the earliest public competitions in tragedy were established. The first contest was held in the year 535, when Thespis, now an old man, took part in the performance, and won the crown of victory<sup>2</sup>. Shortly before this period Peisistratus had returned once more from exile, and begun his third and final tyranny. The regulation of the tragic contests must therefore have been carried out under his auspices. Some critics, relying on the fact that the City Dionysia is known to have been of comparatively late date, have gone so far as to conjecture that the entire festival was now first instituted by Peisistratus<sup>3</sup>. But it seems more reasonable to suppose that it was already in existence, and

νικησάντων διθυράμβων: Isaëus orat. v. § 36 οὗτος γὰρ τῇ μὲν φυλῇ εἰς Διονύσια χορηγίας τέταρτος ἐγένετο, τραγῳδοῖς δὲ καὶ πυρριχισταῖς ὅστας. In this passage to be choregus to one's tribe is contrasted with being choregus to a tragic chorus. Bentley's emendation (Phalaris p. 360 τῇ μὲν φυλῇ εἰς Διονύσια χορηγίας τέταρτος ἐγένετο τραγῳδοῖς, καὶ πυρριχισταῖς ὅστας) is quite unnecessary, and contains the fatal error of making Dicaeogenes *fourth* in the tragic contest, though the number of competitors in tragedy never exceeded three.

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 971 (record of victors at the City Dionysia, printed in

Appendix B). Ibid. ii. 1234 ff. See below, p. 62, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> Marmor Par. ep. 43 ἀφ' οὗ Θέσπης ὁ ποιητὴς [ἐφάνη], πρῶτος δὲ ἐδίδαξε [δρ]α[μα ἐν α]στ[ει, καὶ ἐ]τέθη ὁ [τ]ράγος [ἀθλον], ἔτη . . . The date is lost, but must have fallen between 542 and 520, the preceding and subsequent epochs. Suidas v. Θέσπης (ἐδίδαξε δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς πρώτης καὶ ξ' Ὀλυμπιάδος) doubtless refers to the same contest, which may therefore be assigned to 536-5 B.C.

<sup>3</sup> Thucyd. ii. 15 calls the Anthesteria the ἀρχαιότερα Διονύσια, as opposed to the City Dionysia.

was merely reorganised by him, and amplified by the addition of the tragic competitions. As to the character of these early contests very little can be ascertained. It would be interesting to know whether they were regulated from the first on the same system which afterwards prevailed during the fifth century. But unfortunately the records which bear upon the subject are too slight to lead to any definite conclusion. Choerilus, who began to exhibit in 523, is credited with the composition of a hundred and sixty plays<sup>1</sup>. If the number is correct, it would show that even in the sixth century it was customary for each poet to produce several tragedies at each individual festival. Again, Pratinas, the contemporary of Choerilus, is said to have written fifty plays, of which thirty-two were satyric dramas<sup>2</sup>. From this statement we might infer that the relative proportion of tragedies and satyric plays exhibited during this early period was far less unequal than in later times. But the inference is rendered doubtful by the fact that the number of dramas ascribed to Pratinas may represent, not the total amount which he even wrote, but merely the number which happened to be preserved in the time of the grammarians.

When we turn to the fifth century, the information is more complete. Records have been preserved in sufficient quantity to enable us to determine with moderate certainty the regulations as to the number of tragedies and tragic poets at each celebration of the festival. The question, though apparently a mere matter of numbers, is really one of great interest, and deserves to be considered in detail, since it practically involves the whole subject of trilogies and tetralogies. The practice of writing plays in trilogies and tetralogies produced the most profound effect upon the art of Aeschylus. Any enquiry therefore into the origin and character of this practice will throw light upon one of the most interesting parts in the history of the Greek drama. It will be best in the first place to enumerate all the notices which can be utilised as evidence.

The earliest record is for the year 499 B. C., when Aeschylus made his first public appearance, and his competitors were

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. Χοερίλος.

<sup>2</sup> Id. v. Πρατίνος.



Choerilus and Pratinas. Nothing is known as to the plays produced on this occasion<sup>1</sup>. The next record refers to the year 472. In this year Aeschylus produced the Phineus, Persae, Glaucus, and Prometheus, and was successful in winning the first prize. The Prometheus here mentioned was of course not the Prometheus Vincetus, but a satyric play in which the same myth was treated humorously, and of which two or three fragments are preserved<sup>2</sup>. For the year 467 there is a very complete record of the tragic competition. Aeschylus was again first, and his plays were the Laius, Oedipus, Septem versus Thebas, and satyric play Sphinx. Aristias was second with the Perseus, Tantalus, and satyric play Palaestae written by his father Pratinas. Polyphradmon was third with the Lycurgean tetralogy<sup>3</sup>. According to this notice Aristias only exhibited three plays, while his competitors each exhibited four. But there can be little doubt that the name of one of his plays has dropped out accidentally, and that he produced four like the rest. This is proved by a comparison with the records of other tragic contests, of which a large number exist, referring to very different periods. In these records varieties are found both in the number of poets competing, and in the number of plays exhibited by each poet. But in one respect complete uniformity prevails. With the exception of the case before us there is no instance of poets competing in the same festival with a different number of plays. There can hardly then be any doubt that in the present instance the three poets each exhibited four plays. The next record is for the year 458. This was the year in which Aeschylus made his last appearance as a dramatic poet. He produced the Oresteian tetralogy, consisting of the Agamemnon, Choephoroi, Eumenides, and satyric drama Proteus. The names of the other poets are not mentioned<sup>4</sup>. In addition to the above notices it is also known that on one occasion Aeschylus competed with the four plays composing his Lycurgean tetralogy. The tetralogy dealt with the fate of Lycurgus,

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. *Παρίδας*.

<sup>2</sup> Arg. to Aesch. Persae.

<sup>3</sup> Arg. to Aesch. Theb.

<sup>4</sup> Arg. to Aesch. Agam.

king of the Edoni, and consisted of the Edoni, Bassarides, Neanisci, and satyric play Lycurgus. On another occasion he exhibited a trilogy dealing with the legend of Prometheus. This trilogy, of which the Prometheus Vincit formed a part, no doubt concluded with a satyric drama; but there is no record of it among ancient writers<sup>1</sup>. After the death of Aeschylus there is a gap in our information till the year 438, when Sophocles and Euripides were competitors. Sophocles was first; Euripides second with the Cressae, Alcmaeon in Psophis, Telephus, and Alcestis. In 431 they were again competitors, but this time the first place was taken by Euphorion. Sophocles was second; Euripides third with the Medea, Philoctetes, Dictys, and satyric play Theristae. In 428 the Hippolytus of Euripides was produced; but for this year only the names of the poets have been preserved. Euripides was first, Iophon second, Ion third<sup>2</sup>. The year 415 was memorable for the defeat of Euripides by an obscure poet called Xenocles. On this occasion Xenocles was first with the Oedipus, Lycaon, Bacchae, and satyric play Athamas. Euripides was second with the Alexander, Palamedes, Troades, and satyric play Sisypheus. The only other record referring to the present subject is to the effect that after the death of Euripides, and therefore after 406 B. C., his Iphigeneia in Aulis, Alcmaeon, and Bacchae were produced by his son at the City Dionysia<sup>3</sup>.

In the above notices and records the name of the festival at which the contest took place, and the plays were produced, is usually not mentioned. An exception is made in one case. It is expressly stated that it was at the City Dionysia that the three posthumous tragedies of Euripides were exhibited. Otherwise nothing is said about the festival. But there is not the slightest doubt that all the above notices refer to the City Dionysia. In one instance there is positive proof of the fact. An inscription recently discovered in the Acropolis shows that

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Thesm. 142; Arg. to Aesch. Prom.; Schol. Aesch. Prom. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Args. to Euripid. Alcest., Med.,

Hippol.

<sup>3</sup> Aelian Var. Hist. ii. 8; Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 67.

it was at the City Dionysia that the Orestean tetralogy was produced<sup>1</sup>. Various considerations make it practically certain that the other notices refer to the same festival. At the Lenaea the performances of tragedy were always comparatively unimportant. It is doubtful whether they existed at all during the earlier half of the fifth century. Even in later times they were never placed on a level with the performances of comedy. It is impossible to suppose that the three great masters of tragedy,—Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides,—during the height of their reputation, produced their plays at a festival of this kind. The omission of all mention of the festival in the notices about their tragedies is in itself a conclusive proof that there could be no doubt upon the subject, and that it was a matter of general knowledge that they were brought out at the City Dionysia. The case was very different in comedy. Comedy flourished with equal vigour at both festivals. Hence in the records about the plays of Aristophanes care is generally taken to notify the festival at which they were produced. In the case of tragedy it was felt that any such specification was unnecessary.

From the notices and records enumerated above two conclusions may be drawn concerning the tragic contests at the City Dionysia during the fifth century. In the first place it is evident that the number of poets who were allowed to take part in the competition was fixed at three. It used sometimes to be suggested that the records gave, not the names of all the competitors, but merely those of the three most successful ones. But this suggestion has been finally overthrown by the discovery of the Constitution of Athens. From this treatise we learn that in the time of the author the tragic poets who exhibited at the

<sup>1</sup> This inscription was discovered in the Acropolis in 1886, and is published in Corp. Ins. Att. iv. 971 f. It runs as follows: *Ἐπὶ Φιλοκλέους Οἰνήτις παῖδων, | Δημόδοκος ἐχορήγει· | Ἱπποθωντὶς ἀνδρῶν, | Εὐκτῆμων Ἐλευσίνιος ἐχορήγει· | κωμωδῶν Εὐρυκλείδης ἐχορήγει, | Εὐφρόνιος ἐδίδασκε· | τραγῶδων Ξενοκλῆς Ἀφιδναῖος ἐχορήγει, | Αἰσχύλος ἐδίδασκεν.* That

the plays exhibited on this occasion by Aeschylus were the Orestean tetralogy is proved by the Arg. to the Agamemnon: *ἐδιδάχθη τὸ δράμα ἐπὶ ἀρχοντος Φιλοκλέους ὀλυμπιάδι ὀγδοηκοστῇ ἔτει δευτέρῳ. πρῶτος Αἰσχύλος Ἀγαμέμνονι, Χοηφόροις, Εὐμένεισι, Πρωτῇ σατυρικῷ, ἐχορήγει Ξενοκλῆς Ἀφιδνεύς.*

City Dionysia were three in number. But the tragic didascalie of the period always give the names of three poets, together with their plays. In the same way the treatise puts the number of the comic poets at five; and five is the number found in the later didascalie<sup>1</sup>. Clearly, then, it was the custom in these didascalie records to enumerate all the poets who shared in the competition. Nor is the fact remarkable, when we remember that it was a great distinction for a poet to be permitted to exhibit at all at one of the annual festivals, and that he only received this permission after being chosen by the archon from a long list of rival applicants.

In the second place the records show that each poet was expected to exhibit three tragedies and a satyric play. This inference is confirmed by a statement in Diogenes Laërtius<sup>2</sup>. The practice of terminating the tragic pieces with the boisterous licence of the satyric drama suggested to Ion of Chios, the tragic poet of the fifth century, his well-known remark that virtue, like a tragic poet's group of plays, should always contain a satyric element<sup>3</sup>. It is noticeable that on one occasion Euripides substituted the *Alcestis*, a short tragedy with a tinge of comedy about it, for the usual satyric drama. This may have been not infrequently the case, especially during the latter half of the fifth century. The statement in the last notice, that the *Iphigeneia*, *Alcmaeon*, and *Bacchae* of Euripides were brought out by his son at the City Dionysia, does not necessarily imply that they were brought out by themselves, without any satyric play to make up the number four. It is possible indeed that at this

<sup>1</sup> Athen. Pol. c. 56; Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 972, 973, 975; Arg. to Aristoph. Plutus.

<sup>2</sup> Diog. Laërt. iii. 56 Θρασύλλος δὲ φησὶ καὶ κατὰ τὴν τραγικὴν τετραλογία ἐκδοῦναι αὐτὸν τοὺς διαλόγους· οἷον ἐκείνοι τέττασι δράμασιν ἡγωνίζοντο, Διονυσίοις, Ἀθναίοις, Παναθηναίοις, Χύτροις, ὧν τὸ τέταρτον ἦν σατυρικόν· τὰ δὲ τέτταρα δράματα ἐκαλεῖτο τετραλογία. εἰσι τοίνυν, φησὶν, οἱ πάντες αὐτῷ γνήσιοι διάλογοι, κ.τ.λ. Thrasyllus was a philosopher who flourished in the time of the emperor Tiberius. The passage

οἷον ἐκείνοι . . . τετραλογία is apparently an explanatory interpolation by Diogenes himself. The statement that the four plays of a tetralogy were performed at four different festivals is manifestly absurd in itself, and abundantly disproved by the inscriptions. Moreover, it is expressly recorded that the *Iphigeneia* in Aulis, *Alcmaeon*, and *Bacchae* of Euripides were brought out together at the City Dionysia (Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 67).

<sup>3</sup> See note on next page.

late period the satyric play had begun to be occasionally dispensed with. But on the other hand it is very likely that the satyric play in this case was supplied by the younger Euripides. That no mention of it is made in the above statement is easily intelligible, since the writer does not profess to give a record of the tragic contest for the year, but is merely concerned with the biography of the elder Euripides.

### § 5. *Trilogies and Tetralogies.*

The four plays exhibited by each poet might either be independent works of art, totally unconnected in subject, or they might deal with the same legend, and be fused together into a single artistic whole. When the four plays were connected by community of subject, they were called tetralogies. Similarly the three tragedies, regarded apart from the satyric drama, were called trilogies when connected together in this manner<sup>1</sup>. The practice of exhibiting trilogies and tetralogies is inseparably connected with the name of Aeschylus. Unfortunately there is no information as to the origin and development of the custom. It is not known whether he invented it, or inherited it from his predecessors. But we know that before the time of Aeschylus tragedy as a form of art had made but little progress. It was he that inspired it with dignity and splendour. It is far from likely that the rough and unfinished productions of his

<sup>1</sup> The general word for a play or group of plays produced by one poet at the same festival was *διδασκαλία*. Thus Ion remarked (Plut. Peric. p. 154 E) that virtue, like a *τραγικὴ διδασκαλία*, should contain a satyric element. The *τραγικὴ διδασκαλία* in Ion's time usually consisted of three tragedies and a satyric drama. Cp. also Anthol. Pal. vii. 37 ἢ δ' ἐνὶ χερσὶν Κούρμος, ἐκ ποίης ἦδε διδασκαλίας: Plut. X orat. 839 D διδασκαλίας ἀστικὰς καθήκεν ἕξ . . . καὶ ἑτέρας δύο Ἀθηναϊκάς. The word *τετραλογία* was not applied to all groups of four plays, but only to those groups in which the separate plays were connected together by unity of subject. This is

proved by the statement in Suidas (v. *Σοφοκλῆς*), that Sophocles abandoned the practice of exhibiting 'tetralogies.' Yet Sophocles brought out four plays at a time, like his rivals. It is also proved by the use of the word *τετραλογία* in Greek writers. There are four places in which it is applied to particular groups of plays. It is applied to the Oresteia of Aeschylus (Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 1155), the Pandionis of Philocles (Schol. Aristoph. Av. 282), the Lycurgeia of Aeschylus (Schol. Aristoph. Thesm. 135), and the Lycurgeia of Polyphradmon (Arg. to Aesch. Theb.). All these were groups of plays upon a single subject.

predecessors should have been cast in the elaborate mould of the tetralogy. And the largeness of design involved in tracing the same tragic story through three successive dramas is a conception peculiarly akin to the grandeur of Aeschylus' genius. Hence it is exceedingly probable, though not certain, that the system was his invention. He did not employ it on all occasions. In one of the records quoted above the four plays which he is said to have exhibited together are apparently quite unconnected in subject. These are the Phineus, Persae, Glaucus, and Prometheus, produced in 472. As a matter of fact the only tetralogies of Aeschylus for which there is direct evidence are the four already mentioned, dealing with the legends of Oedipus, Lycurgus, Prometheus, and Orestes. How many more he wrote is a matter of uncertainty. If the system of tetralogies was invented by him, it could hardly have been developed in its full completeness all at once. It is probable that he began his career by exhibiting groups of isolated plays. Even in later times the record just referred to proves that he did not invariably employ the form of the tetralogy.

Fortunately for our knowledge of the Greek drama, a specimen of the Aeschylean trilogy has been preserved in the *Oresteia*. This was the latest work of its author, and in it the trilogic form of composition is brought to the highest perfection. A great crime is committed, and its consequences are traced through successive plays, until finally the guilt is expiated, and the ministers of vengeance satisfied. The whole forms a magnificent work of art; and the separate plays, though complete in themselves, gain additional significance and impressiveness from their position in the trilogy. The general effect can be appreciated even by a modern reader, but must have been still more striking to an ancient audience, before whom the three plays were performed in succession in the course of the same morning. But it would be a mistake to suppose that all the trilogies of Aeschylus were equally perfect in construction. Probably in some cases they treated of one subject without possessing much real artistic unity. The three plays, while depicting successive stages in some great national legend,

may have been strung together after the fashion of a chronicle or history, rather than welded into one compact whole. This seems to have been to some extent the case with the *Oedipodeia*. The third play of this trilogy, the *Seven against Thebes*, was far from bringing the legend to a conclusion in the same artistic and satisfying manner in which the *Oresteia* is concluded by the *Eumenides*. The final scene of the *Seven against Thebes* is like the prelude to a new play. In this scene Antigone proclaims her resolve to bury the corpse of her brother in spite of Creon's prohibition, and the herald warns her of the risk she will incur by setting the authorities at defiance<sup>1</sup>. Here then is an instance of a trilogy which breaks off in the middle of a legend, at a point where there is no artistic necessity for it to do so. The concluding play of the three, instead of bringing matters to a final settlement, ends with a suggestion of future difficulties and crimes. A trilogy of this kind resembles the poems of the Epic Cycle, in which legends were linked together in chronological order, and the point at which the story began and ended was determined by purely accidental considerations. Other trilogies of Aeschylus may have approximated to the same type. At any rate it is most unlikely that they were all as perfect and harmonious in construction as the *Oresteia*. Attempts have been made, especially by Hermann and Welcker, to take the titles of the lost plays of Aeschylus, and group them together into tetralogies. But it is clear that conjectural arrangements of this kind must be received with the greatest caution, and this for two reasons. In the first place it is uncertain how many of the tetralogies

<sup>1</sup> The *didascalia* to the *Septem v. Thebas* was first brought to light by Franz in 1848 (*Didasc. zu Aesch. Sept.*, Berl. 1848). Previously to the discovery of this *didascalia* there was hardly any point upon which the critics were more unanimous than that the *Septem* must have been the middle play of a trilogy. The concluding scene, in which Antigone proclaims her resolve to bury the corpse of her brother, was supposed to obviously pave the way to the final play

of the three, in which the same subject was treated as in the *Antigone* of Sophocles. The publication of the *didascalia* revealed the fact that the *Septem* was after all the concluding play of the group, and that the trilogy consisted of the *Laius*, the *Oedipus*, and the *Septem*. Nothing could have more clearly demonstrated the futility of endeavouring, by mere conjecture, to arrange the lost plays of Aeschylus in tetralogies.

of Aeschylus conformed to the perfect model of the *Oresteia*. In the second place it is probable that a large number of his plays were not composed in tetralogies at all.

The relation of the satyric play to the three tragedies which preceded it is a question of some importance in connexion with the composition of tetralogies. The usual theory seems to have been that the satyric play should deal with the same subject as the trilogy, but from a humorous point of view; and that some of the personages out of the trilogy should appear in it. The king or hero whose sufferings had already been depicted was now to be exhibited in a different aspect, amid the wild surroundings of a satyr's existence. It was necessary to give a certain tinge of poetry and romance to the composition, and not jar the feelings with a sense of incongruity, by introducing the tragic personage into scenes of ordinary comedy. This is well expressed in the lines of Horace:—

Verum ita risores, ita commendare dicaces  
Conveniet Satyros, ita vertere seria ludo,  
Ne quicumque deus, quicumque adhibebitur heros,  
Regali conspectus in auro nuper et ostro,  
Migret in obscuras humili sermone tabernas,  
Aut dum vitat humum nubes et inania capet<sup>1</sup>.

The satyric plays of Aeschylus seem, when they formed part of a tetralogy, to have been of this type. The *Oedipodeia* concluded with the Sphinx, the *Lycurgeia* with the Lycurgus. In both these plays some of the personages out of the preceding trilogy must have appeared. The *Oresteia* is called a tetralogy, and therefore the *Proteus*, the satyric play with which it concluded, was probably connected with the other three plays in subject. But in the absence of information it is impossible to say what that connexion was, and what personages took the leading part in the play. Curiously enough the satyric play *Prometheus* did not conclude the *Promethean* trilogy, as we should have expected, but was performed along with the *Persae*, and two other independent plays. The practice of terminating a trilogy with a satyric play upon the same subject may seem questionable to modern taste, and can hardly be

<sup>1</sup> Hor. *Ars Poet.* 225 foll.



defended on artistic grounds. Like many other customs of the Greek drama, it was an accident due to the circumstances in which tragedy originated. Tragedy was developed out of the odes to Dionysus sung by choruses of satyrs; and as it departed more and more from its original character, a regard for antiquity required that the satyric element should be retained in some form or another. Hence the practice of concluding every tragic performance with a satyric play of the old-fashioned type.

Sophocles is said to have been the first to abandon the system of writing plays in tetralogies<sup>1</sup>. Each of his dramas formed an independent work of art. It appears to be implied that before his time the practice of writing tetralogies had been very generally adopted; and it is only natural to suppose that the commanding genius of Aeschylus would cause his example to be widely followed. But the fashion set by Sophocles was adopted by the younger poets. In 467, the very next year after the first tragic victory of Sophocles, when Aeschylus produced his Theban tetralogy, and Polyphradmon his Lycurgeia, the third poet Aristias appears to have exhibited a group of independent plays<sup>2</sup>. After the death of Aeschylus the practice of composing tetralogies rapidly went into disuse. The records show that Euripides abandoned the system. In fact, during the latter half of the fifth century only three tetralogies are mentioned. A Pandionis was written by Philocles, the nephew of Aeschylus, who naturally continued the traditions of

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. Σοφοκλῆς· καὶ αὐτὸς ἦρξε τοῦ δράμα πρὸς δράμα ἀγωνίζεσθαι, ἀλλὰ μὴ τετραλογίαν. These words seem to imply that Sophocles exhibited only one play at each festival. But this cannot have been the case, as the didascalic records show. Probably therefore Suidas has misunderstood and misquoted his authority, who meant to say that Sophocles exhibited, not single plays, but groups of plays which were unconnected in subject. Oehmichen (Philolog. Wochenschr., 1887, p. 1058) suggests that after the reform of Sophocles each

poet exhibited one of his tragedies on each successive day of the competition, and that this is the meaning of Suidas' words. But Sophocles would have no power, as poet, to make an alteration of this kind in the arrangements of the festival. Moreover, tetralogies were occasionally written even at the close of the fourth century (e.g. the Oedipodeia of Meletus, and the Pandionis of Philocles). But their effect would have been spoiled, if they had been exhibited piecemeal on successive days.

<sup>2</sup> Arg. to Aesch. Theb.

the Aeschylean system. An Oedipodeia, apparently a tetralogy, was composed by Meletus, the prosecutor of Socrates. Plato is said to have written a tetralogy in his youth, but to have abandoned poetry for philosophy before it was exhibited. In the course of the succeeding century the practice of writing tetralogies came to be so little regarded that Aristotle never even mentions it in his *Poetics*<sup>1</sup>.

Some difficulty has been made as to the derivation of the words trilogy and tetralogy. As far as their etymology goes they ought to denote groups of speeches rather than groups of plays. In their dramatic sense the words do not occur frequently, and were of comparatively late origin. The word tetralogy, as applied to the drama, is not found before the time of Aristotle; the word trilogy not before that of Aristophanes the grammarian<sup>2</sup>. It is quite possible that the dramatic meaning of a tetralogy may have been a secondary one, and that the word was used at first in reference to oratory. It was the custom of the Greek orators to write groups of four speeches, two for the prosecution and two for the defence, about fictitious cases, to serve as models for their pupils. Three groups of this kind, composed by Antiphon, have come down to us, and are called tetralogies. It is very likely that this was the original meaning of the word, and that it was only in the course of the fourth century that it came to be applied by analogy to the drama. It would be convenient to have a generic term to denote groups of four plays composed about a single subject in the Aeschylean fashion. When the word tetralogy had once acquired this sense, it would be an easy step to form by analogy the word trilogy, to denote the three tragedies apart from the satyric play. Satyric plays

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Av. 282; Schol. Plat. Apol. p. 330, ed. Bekk.; Aelian Var. Hist. ii. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 1155 *τετραλογίαν φέρουσι τὴν Ὀρέστειαν αἱ Διδασκαλῖαι*. The Didascaliae are the work of Aristotle. Diog. Laërt. iii. 61 *ἐνίοι δέ, ὃν ἐστὶ καὶ Ἀριστοφάνης ὁ γραμματικὸς, εἰς τριλογίας ἔλκουσι τοὺς διαλόγους*.

The other passages in which the word *τετραλογία* occurs in a dramatic sense are Diog. Laërt. iii. 56, ix. 45; Schol. Plat. Apol. p. 330; Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 1155, Av. 282, Thesm. 142; Arg. to Aesch. Theb. The word *τριλογία* only occurs in three places, viz. Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 1155; Diog. Laërt. iii. 61; Suidas v. *Νικόμαχος*.

were treated with comparative neglect in later times, and were easily separable from the tragedies which preceded them. Possibly also in many cases the three tragedies may have been connected in subject with one another, but independent of the satyric play. Hence the convenience of a term to denote the three tragedies by themselves. It is said that the grammarians Aristarchus and Apollonius preferred to disregard the satyric plays altogether, and to speak only of trilogies<sup>1</sup>. But although the generic terms trilogy and tetralogy were of relatively late origin, it was customary at a much earlier period to give a common name to groups of plays composed on the tetralogic system. The poet Aristophanes cites the group of plays about Lycurgus under the title of the *Lycurgeia*; and in the same way he cites the group of plays about Orestes as the *Oresteia*<sup>2</sup>. These and similar titles no doubt dated from the time of Aeschylus himself.

§ 6. *Tragedy at the City Dionysia in later times.*

It has been worth while to discuss in some detail the question as to the number of tragedies produced each year at the City Dionysia during the fifth century, because of the interest of the subject. The fourth century is a period of decay as far as tragedy is concerned. For the first half of the century there is a complete blank in our information as to the system of tragic competitions at the City Dionysia. On coming to the latter half of the century it is found that considerable changes had been made. An inscription discovered in recent years gives a copious record of the tragic contests at the City Dionysia for the years 341 and 340<sup>3</sup>. From this record it appears that the satyric drama had now been completely separated from tragedy. The proceedings commenced with the performance of a single satyric play. Then followed a representation of an old tragedy by one of the great tragic

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 1155.

the Greeks, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Aristoph. Thesm. 135, Ran. 1124.

<sup>3</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 973.

See, on these titles, the Tragic Drama of

poets. In 341 the old tragedy was the Iphigeneia of Euripides; in 340 it was the Orestes of Euripides. Then at length after the satyric play and the old tragedy had been performed, came the competition with new and original tragedies. The number of competing poets was still three, as it had been from the earliest times. But the number of tragedies varied from year to year. In 341 each poet exhibited three tragedies; in 340 each poet exhibited two. Here the information ends. It appears then that by the latter half of the fourth century the satyric drama had receded still further into the background. In the fifth century each poet had exhibited one satyric play at the end of his three tragedies. But now a single satyric play at the commencement of the proceedings was considered sufficient. The poet who was to have the honour of performing this play would be selected beforehand by the archon. There is no evidence to show when the new system came into existence; but it must have been in the course of the first half of the fourth century. Another point to be noticed is the gradual decrease in the number of new tragedies produced each year. In 341 it was nine; in 340 it was only six. It is impossible to say with certainty what was the practice during the first half of the fourth century. When the change in regard to the satyric drama was first made, the tragic poets may have continued to produce four plays apiece, substituting a tragedy for the old satyric play, just as Euripides had done in 438, when he exhibited the Alceste. Or on the other hand the change may have consisted in simply discontinuing the satyric play, and leaving the tragic poets to compete with three tragedies only. There is very little evidence which bears upon the subject, but such as it is, it rather points to the conclusion that at first the number four was retained. Theodectes, the rhetorician and tragic poet, flourished in the middle of the fourth century. He wrote 'fifty tragedies,' and engaged in thirteen contests. These numbers seem to imply that in most of the contests in which he was engaged he exhibited four tragedies<sup>1</sup>. Again, Aphareus, the tragic poet, wrote thirty-five

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. Θεοδέκτης; Steph. Byzant. v. Φάσηλις.

confessedly genuine tragedies, and engaged in eight contests ranging in date from 368 to 341. Here too the inference seems to be that he must have exhibited four tragedies on most of these occasions<sup>1</sup>. The only way to escape such an inference would be to suppose that both Aphareus and Theodectes wrote a considerable number of plays which were never intended for the stage. Such a practice was not unknown at this time. The tragic poet Chaeremon, the contemporary of Aphareus and Theodectes, wrote tragedies which were simply intended to be read<sup>2</sup>. But as yet the practice was unusual, and nothing of the kind is related of Theodectes and Aphareus. Hence the probability is that during the earlier part of the fourth century each poet at the City Dionysia exhibited four tragedies. But owing to the scantiness of the evidence it is impossible to come to any certain conclusion on the subject.

It has been seen that in 340 the total number of new tragedies produced at the City Dionysia was only six. The decrease in numbers points to the gradual decay of tragedy at Athens. With the close of the fourth century the great period of Attic tragedy came to an end. The centre of literary activity was transferred to Alexandria, and to this city the more creative poetical minds were attracted. Still, in spite of this circumstance, it would be a mistake to suppose that the fertility of the Athenian poets was entirely exhausted, or that there was any immediate cessation in the supply of new compositions. A long series of inscriptions shows that, down even to the Christian era, 'original tragedies' continued to be regarded as the chief ornament of the City Dionysia. It is true that the celebration of the festival was sometimes intermitted, owing to the pressure of war and other causes. But apart from obstacles of this kind, new dramas were produced every year in the usual manner<sup>3</sup>. The names of several Athenian tragic poets belonging to this epoch have been preserved in the theatrical records<sup>4</sup>. As to the regulations which now prevailed at the festival, and the relative proportion between the old and

<sup>1</sup> Plut. X orat. 839 D.

<sup>2</sup> Aristot. Rhet. iii. 11.

<sup>3</sup> See the Tragic Drama of the Greeks, p. 444.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 445.

the new tragedies, nothing is known. After the first century A.D. the representation of original work in tragedy was finally abandoned in all parts of Greece, and the City Dionysia would form no exception to the rule. But as the festival itself continued to flourish, the production of old plays may have lasted, here as elsewhere, for one or two centuries later<sup>1</sup>.

### § 7. *Comedy at the City Dionysia.*

The history of the tragic contests at the City Dionysia having now been traced down to the latest times, the contests in comedy have next to be considered. The date of their institution can only be fixed approximately. On the one hand we know that they were of much later origin than the tragic competitions, and cannot therefore have gone back beyond about 500 B.C.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand there is an inscription which shows that they were already in existence at any rate as early as the year 463<sup>3</sup>. It follows that their establishment must be assigned to some period within the first four decades of the fifth century; but there are no means of determining the exact year. The only other piece of evidence is the statement that Chionides, one of the earliest Athenian comic poets, began to exhibit in 487<sup>4</sup>. Now it is unlikely that this date would have been remembered with such accuracy unless it had referred to a regular public contest. Hence we are perhaps justified in assuming that in 487 comic competitions were already an annual institution. But unfortunately, as there is

<sup>1</sup> See the *Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, pp. 444-446, 447 foll. For the existence of the City Dionysia in the second century A.D. cp. *Corp. Ins. Att.* iii. 78; *Philostrat. Vit. Soph.* p. 549; *Paus.* i. 29. 2, 38. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Aristot. Poet.* c. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Corp. Ins. Att.* ii. 971 a records a comic victory of Magnes, and is shown, by a comparison with iv. 971 b, to be not later than 463. This fragment, the earliest of the long series of City Dionysia records, begins with the mutilated

statement *πρῶτον κῶμοι ἦσαν τῶν . . .* Some critics (e.g. Köhler ad loc., and Wilamowitz, *Hermes*, xxi. p. 597) assume that *κῶμοι* = comedies, and hence infer that comedy was first introduced into the City Dionysia about 463. But there are no grounds for giving this sense to *κῶμοι* here. There was a *κῶμος* of the ordinary kind at the City Dionysia (*Dem. Meid.* § 10), and it may be to this that the fragment refers.

<sup>4</sup> *Suidas* v. *Χιονίδης*.

nothing to show at which festival Chionides made his first appearance, the tradition is of little value in determining the chronology of the City Dionysia.

The number of poets who were allowed to take part in the comic contests at the City Dionysia differed at different periods. During the fifth century it was limited to three, as in tragedy. The *Clouds*, the *Peace*, and the *Birds* of Aristophanes were all brought out at the City Dionysia during the latter part of the fifth century; and on each of these occasions Aristophanes was opposed by two competitors<sup>1</sup>. At the Lenaea during the fifth century the number of the competing poets was also three. In the beginning of the fourth century the number was raised to five at both festivals, and appears to have continued unchanged throughout the subsequent history of the Attic drama<sup>2</sup>. The increase was probably due, partly to the growing popularity of comedy, and partly also to the decline of the chorus. A comedy with a slight and insignificant chorus, like that in the *Plutus*, would be less expensive to produce, and would take less time to perform. A larger number of comedies was therefore provided, and the number of poets had consequently to be increased.

It does not appear however that comedy was ever exhibited at Athens on the same large scale as tragedy. It has already been shown that during the most flourishing period of Attic tragedy each poet was accustomed to produce no less than four plays at the annual festival. But in comedy it was the invariable practice to compete with single plays only. In all the notices of comic contests which remain there is no instance of a poet competing with more than one play. The total number of comedies produced each year at the City Dionysia would be three during the fifth century, and five during the succeeding centuries. These figures appear small compared with the number of tragedies produced each year at the same festival. But although each poet competed with a single play,

<sup>1</sup> Args. to Aristoph. *Nubes*, *Pax*, *Aves*.

<sup>2</sup> Arg. to Aristoph. *Plutus* (festival uncertain); Athen. Pol. c. 56 (City

Dionysia); Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 972 (Lenaea), 975 (probably City Dionysia).

it was not impossible for a man to exhibit two comedies at the same contest. However, in order to do so he had to appear really as two poets, and to compete as it were against himself. The total number of comedies remained the same, but the poet was allowed to appear twice over, and to run a double chance of success. Instances of such an occurrence are occasionally found. In 422 Philonides took the place of two poets, and exhibited both the *Prelude* and the *Wasps*. He was first with the *Prelude*, and second with the *Wasps*, and his antagonist Leucon was third with the *Ambassadors*<sup>1</sup>. Both the *Prelude* and the *Wasps* were really plays of Aristophanes, but were brought out in the name of the poet Philonides. Again in 353 Diodorus made a double appearance, and was second with the *Corpse*, and third with the *Madman*<sup>2</sup>. Such instances of a poet taking the place of two competitors, and thus standing a double chance of obtaining the first position, cannot have been of common occurrence. They were probably due, when they did occur, either to an exceptional dearth of new comedies, or to very marked inferiority on the part of the other poets who had applied for permission to compete.

We have seen that comedy was much later than tragedy in being officially recognised by the state. It also continued to grow and develop much longer. One of the most brilliant periods of Attic comedy falls at a time when tragedy, though not defunct, had sunk into insignificance. A sure symptom of decay, both in tragedy and comedy, was the tendency to fall back upon the past, and reproduce old plays, instead of striking out new developments. As regards tragedy this practice had already become prevalent by the middle of the fourth century. But in comedy the creative impulse was still at that time predominant. A fresh direction was being given to the art by the development of the *New Comedy*, or comedy of manners. There was not as yet any tendency to have recourse to the past. In the record of the exhibitions of comedy for the year 353 there is no trace of any reproduction of old plays. When the practice

<sup>1</sup> Arg. to Aristoph. *Vespae*.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 972.



first commenced it is impossible to say. Probably it was not until the more productive period of the New Comedy had come to an end, and the creative instinct had begun to flag. There is a complete break in our information from the middle of the fourth century to the beginning of the second. When we come to the second century, the practice of reproducing old comedies is found to have become a regular occurrence. This appears from a long inscription of that period, referring in all probability to the City Dionysia, and containing a detailed record of the contests in comedy<sup>1</sup>. From this inscription we see that the five new comedies were regularly preceded by an old one, just as in tragedy, a hundred and fifty years before, the proceedings had commenced with the performance of an old play. Among the old comedies reproduced in this manner appear Menander's *Ghost* and *Misogynist*, Philemon's *Phocians*, Posidippus' *Outcast*, and Philippides' *Lover of the Athenians*. It is noticeable that all these plays belong to the New Comedy, and that there are no traces of any tendency to fall back upon the Middle or the Old. The interest of the older comedy depended so largely upon local and personal allusions, and was so closely bound up with the circumstances of the time in which it was produced, that its failure to attract the public of a later generation is not surprising.

The above record, if correctly assigned to the City Dionysia, proves that original comedies were regularly exhibited there at any rate as late as the second century B. C., and that whenever there was a contest, five new plays were produced. After the second century there are no further notices concerning this particular festival. But there is evidence to show that in other parts of Greece new comedies, as well as new tragedies, continued to figure in the programme of various festal gatherings down to the Christian era, and even later<sup>2</sup>. Hence there is no reason to doubt that the same practice prevailed at the City Dionysia for an equally long period.

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 975.

<sup>2</sup> *Εφημερίς Ἀρχαιολογική*, 1884, pp. 120,

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Gr. 1585, 1587, 2759; 124, 126; Rangabé, *Antiq. Hellén.*, vol. Athen. Mittheil. 1894, pp. 96, 97; ii. no. 965.

§ 8. *Order of Contests at the City Dionysia.*

The regulations concerning the dramatic contests at the City Dionysia have now been described in detail. Before passing on to the Lenaea it will be well to take a general survey of the various competitions at the City Dionysia. There were two dithyrambic contests, one between five choruses of boys, and the other between five choruses of men. There was a tragic contest in which three poets took part. During the fifth and earlier part of the fourth century each of these poets exhibited four plays. Later on the number of original plays began to be diminished, and the competition was preceded by an old tragedy. There was also a contest in comedy in which originally three poets took part; but in the course of the fourth century the number of poets was raised to five. Each poet exhibited a single comedy.

As to the order in which the various performances took place, and the method in which they were grouped together, there is very little evidence. One thing may be regarded as certain, and that is that the three groups of tragedies were performed on three successive days. It is difficult to see what other arrangement would have been possible, as two groups, consisting of eight tragedies, would have been too much for a single day<sup>1</sup>. As to the relative arrangement of dithyrambs, comedies, and tragedies, not much can be laid down for certain. In all the records which refer to the City Dionysia the various competitions are always enumerated in the same order. First come the choruses of boys, then the choruses of men, then comedy, then tragedy. Also in the law of Euegorus the same order is observed in

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle in the *Poetics* (c. 24), speaking of the proper size of an epic poem, says that it should be shorter than the old epics, and about equal in length to the tragedies performed on a single day (πρὸς δὲ τὸ πλῆθος τραγωδιῶν τῶν εἰς μίαν ἀκρόασιν τιθεμένων παρήκειν). It has already been shown that it is not

quite clear what the practice was at the time to which Aristotle refers. But to suppose a performance of four tragedies on one day would harmonise very well with the statement of Aristotle. Four tragedies would contain about 6,000 lines, and the *Iliad* contains about 15,000 lines, the *Odyssey* about 12,000.

recounting the different performances at the City Dionysia<sup>1</sup>. It has been argued that this was the order in which the contests took place; that the dithyrambos came first, then the comedies, and the tragedies last of all. But there seems to be very little justification for such an inference. It is quite as likely that the order followed in these lists was based upon the relative importance of the different contests. In fact, the only piece of evidence in regard to the subject which has any appearance of certainty about it seems to show that at any rate during the fifth century the comedies followed the tragedies at the City Dionysia. This evidence is contained in a passage in the *Birds* of Aristophanes. The *Birds* was performed at the City Dionysia. In that play the chorus, in the course of a short ode, remark how delightful it would be to have wings. They say that if one of the spectators was tired with the tragic choruses, he might fly away home, and have his dinner, and then fly back again to the comic choruses<sup>2</sup>. It follows that at that time the comedies were performed after the tragedies. In the fifth century there were three comedies performed at the City Dionysia, and three groups of tragedies. Most likely therefore each group of tragedies was performed in the mornings of three successive days, and was followed in the afternoon by a comedy. In the fourth century, when the number of comedies was raised to five, a new arrangement would be necessary. Possibly the comedies were then transferred to

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 971 a-e, iv. 971 f-h; Demosth. Meid. § 10.

<sup>2</sup> Aristoph. Av. 785-789 οὐδέν ἐστ' ἄμεινον οὐδ' ἥδιον ἢ φύσαι πτερὰ. | αὐτίχ' ὑμῶν τῶν θεατῶν εἴ τις ἦν ὑπόπτερος, | εἶτα πεινῶν τοῖς χοροῖσι τῶν τραγῳδῶν ἔλθοιτο, | ἐκπτόμενος ἂν οὗτος ἡρίστησεν ἑλθὼν οἴκαδε, | κατ' ἂν ἐμπλησθεὶς ἐφ' ἡμᾶς αὖθις αὖ κατέπτατο. Müller (Griech. Bühnen. p. 322) and others take ἐφ' ἡμᾶς to mean generally 'to us in the theatre'; and deny that it refers to the comic chorus in particular. But in that case there would be no point in the sentence. There is obviously a contrast between ὑμεῖς, the spectators, and

ἡμεῖς, the comic chorus. The same contrast is strongly emphasised throughout the previous group of trochaics, vv. 753-768. Lipsius (Berichte der K. S. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, philol.-histor. Classe, 1885, p. 417) adopts the old conjecture τραγῳδῶν for τραγῳδῶν, and supposes that the contrast is between ἡμεῖς, the chorus of *Birds*, and οἱ τραγῳδοί, the other comic choruses. Hence he infers that at the City Dionysia all the comedies were performed on a single day by themselves. But τραγῳδοί is a perfectly gratuitous emendation, and makes the whole passage both feeble and obscure.

a single day by themselves. But on these and other points of the same kind there is really no available evidence. One thing is certain, that the whole series of performances, consisting of ten dithyrambs, three to five comedies, and twelve tragedies, cannot have taken up less than four days in the performance<sup>1</sup>. Even if they could have been compressed into three days, it would have exceeded the limits of human endurance to have sat out performances of such enormous length. The festival as a whole, with the procession and other minor amusements, lasted probably either five or six days, as was previously pointed out.

### § 9. *The Lenaea.*

We now come to the Lenaea, the other great Athenian festival at which dramatic performances took place. The Lenaea, like the Anthesteria, was connected with the worship of Dionysus Lenaeus, the god of the 'lenos' or wine-press<sup>2</sup>. It was celebrated, at any rate during the earliest times, in the same place, a district called the Marshes<sup>3</sup>, from which the god of the wine-press derived his additional title of the marsh-god<sup>4</sup>. In this district was a sacred enclosure, the Lenaeon, containing the most ancient and venerable of the temples of Dionysus, which was only opened once a year, on the second day of the Anthesteria. This enclosure was the original scene of the Lenaea<sup>5</sup>. Hence the festival was also called the 'contest

<sup>1</sup> Polus is said to have acted eight tragedies in four days when he was seventy years old (Plut. An seni &c. 785 C). If it was at the City Dionysia, he might have done so, supposing that the old tragedy was performed on the first day, and the new tragedies on the three following days. But as there is nothing to show whether the feat of Polus was performed at Athens or elsewhere, it is impossible to base any conclusions upon the statement.

<sup>2</sup> Hesych. and Etym. Mag. v. ἐνὶ Ἀθηναίων; Schol. Aristoph. Acharn. 960.

<sup>3</sup> Thuc. ii. 15; Hesych. v. λιμναγενές;

Athen. p. 465 A, compared with Dindorf, Prolegom. de Comoed. p. 23, l. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Athen. l.c.; Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 213.

<sup>5</sup> Dem. Neaer. § 76; Hesych. and Etym. Mag. v. ἐνὶ Ἀθηναίων; Phot. v. Ἀθηναίων, &c. We must suppose that the temple was not opened during the Lenaea, but only the enclosure. Dörpfeld (Athen. Mittheil. 1895, p. 161 foll.) thinks both temple and enclosure were shut up, except at the Anthesteria, and that the Lenaeon was not the sacred enclosure itself, but an adjacent site. But

at the Lenaeon,' or the 'Epilenaean Dionysia'; and the poets who were successful in the competitions were announced in official language as 'victors at the Lenaeon'¹.

The site of the Lenaeon and of the Marshes has been the subject of much disputation. In former times it used to be identified with the sanctuary of Dionysus Eleuthereus at the foot of the Acropolis, where the City Dionysia was celebrated. But this identification is now generally abandoned, for the following reasons². In the first place Thucydides tells us that the older Dionysia, or Anthesteria, was held in the Marshes, clearly implying that there was another place for the celebration of the later festival, the City Dionysia³. Again, the distinction which was made between the Lenaea and the City Dionysia, as festivals held respectively 'in the city' and 'at the Lenaeon,' would be almost impossible to account for, unless we suppose some original difference of locality. Thirdly, the temple in the Marshes was of the greatest antiquity, and was only opened once a year, at the Anthesteria. It cannot therefore have been identical with either of the two temples in the sanctuary of Eleuthereus. The oldest of these, which contained the cultus-image, was opened regularly at the City Dionysia; the other was of recent date⁴. It is clear then that the position of the Lenaeon must be sought elsewhere. Evidently, at one time, it was outside the walls, whence the contrast between the 'Lenaeon' and the 'City' festival. But the statements of the grammarians would lead us to suppose that later on, as the city grew in size, it came to be included in its circuit⁵. Dörpfeld now identifies it with a certain triangular-shaped enclosure, which he has lately discovered to the west of the Acropolis,

the grammarians expressly say that the temple was 'in the Lenaeon' (Hesych., Etym. Mag., Phot. l. c.).

¹ *Ἀγναία* Aristoph. *Acharn.* 1155, *Athen.* p. 130 D, &c.; *ἐπὶ Ἀγναίῳ Ἀγῶν* *Acharn.* 504; *ἐπὶ Ἀγναίῳ Διονύσια* Corp. *Ins. Att.* ii. 741; *ἐπιλήγναια Διονύσια* *ibid.* ii. 834 b, *Athen.* Pol. c. 57 (see above, p. 8); *ἐπὶ Ἀγναίῳ διδάσκειν* *Plat. Prot.* 327 D; *ἐπὶ Ἀγναίῳ νικᾶν* *Schol. Aesch. Fals. Leg.* § 15; ἡ *ἐπὶ Ἀγναίῳ*

*πομπή* *Dem. Meid.* § 10.

² First pointed out by Wilamowitz, *Hermes*, xxi. p. 615 foll.

³ *Thuc.* ii. 15.

⁴ *Paus.* i. 29. 2, 38. 8.

⁵ Thus some of them describe it as *ἐν ἀγροίς* (*Schol. Aristoph. Acharn.* 201, 503; *Steph. Byzant. v. Ἀγναίος*), others as *ἐν ἄστει* or *Ἀθήνησιν* (*Hesych.* and *Etym. Mag. v. ἐπὶ Ἀγναίῳ*; *Phot. v. Ἀγναίων*).

and south-east of the Areopagus, not far from the site of the market-place<sup>1</sup>. This enclosure contains some traces of an ancient wine-press and temple, and also the remains of a much later building, which was used by a company of Bacchic worshippers for religious purposes. But these facts are hardly sufficient to establish its identity; and the words of Thucydides would seem to imply that the Lenaeon lay to the south of the Acropolis, and not to the west, or near the market-place<sup>2</sup>.

To consider next the general character of the festival. The Lenaea was held in the month of Gamelion, corresponding to the last half of January and the first half of February<sup>3</sup>. It was still winter, and the sea was dangerous for voyagers<sup>4</sup>. Hence there were few strangers or visitors in Athens. The Lenaea was in fact a domestic sort of festival, confined to the Athenians themselves. The proceedings were quiet and insignificant, in comparison with the splendour of the City Dionysia, when Athens was crowded with visitors from all parts of Greece. In the Acharnians, which was exhibited at the Lenaea, Aristophanes remarks that he can abuse Athens as much as he likes, without incurring the imputation of lowering her in the eyes of foreigners<sup>5</sup>. The proceedings at the Lenaea consisted of a procession, and of exhibitions of tragedy

<sup>1</sup> Athen. Mittheil. 1895, p. 161 foll.; Griechische Theater, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Thuc. ii. 15 τὸ δὲ πρὸ τούτου ἡ ἀκρόπολις ἢ νῦν οὐσα πόλις ἦν, καὶ τὸ ὑπ' αὐτὴν πρὸς νότον μάλιστα τετραμμένον· τεκμήριον δέ· τὰ γὰρ ἱερά ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἀκροπόλει καὶ ἄλλων θεῶν ἔστι καὶ τὰ ἔξω πρὸς τοῦτο τὸ μέρος τῆς πόλεως μᾶλλον ἰδρυται, τό τε τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ Ὀλυμπίου καὶ τὸ Πύθιον καὶ τὸ τῆς Γῆς καὶ τὸ ἐν Δίρῳ Διονύσου. The words τοῦτο τὸ μέρος appear to mean τὸ πρὸς νότον τετραμμένον. Dörpfeld however explains them as denoting, not merely the 'south part,' but the 'whole of the Acropolis plus the south part.' Hence an enclosure to the west of the Acropolis would be, as he thinks, πρὸς τοῦτο τὸ μέρος.

As regards the proximity of the Lenaeon to the market-place he cites

the Patmos Scholia on Dem. de Cor. § 129 (Corr. Hell. i. p. 142), where τὸ κλισίον τὸ πρὸς τῷ καλαμίτῃ ἡρώϊ is described as ἐν ἀγορᾷ, while the ἱερόν of the hero himself is said to have been πρὸς τῷ Ἀθναίῳ. But there appears to be so much guess-work in the ancient explanations of the 'hero Calamites' that this evidence is hardly convincing. As for the tradition about dramatic contests in the market-place in early times, and the bearing of this tradition upon the present question, see below, p. 110.

<sup>3</sup> Bekk. Anecd. p. 235, 6; Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 834b, col. 2, where the expenditure on the Lenaea is placed about the middle of the sixth prytany, i.e. in Gamelion.

<sup>4</sup> Plat. Symp. 223 C; Theophrast. Char. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Aristoph. Acharn. 501 foll.

and comedy. The procession was not like that at the City Dionysia, but was more in imitation of the proceedings at the Anthesteria, and was accompanied by the rough jesting and ribald abuse which were characteristic of the worship of Dionysus and Demeter. There were no dithyrambic contests during the period with which we are acquainted. The festival as a whole was much shorter than the City Dionysia<sup>1</sup>.

Tragedy at the Lenaea was at all times subordinate to comedy. Probably therefore the tragic contests were introduced into this festival at a later date than the comic. But the period of their first institution is very uncertain. We know for a fact that they existed as early as 416, in which year Agathon won a tragic victory at the Lenaea<sup>2</sup>. Further evidence is supplied by a record of certain tragic performances in 419 and 418<sup>3</sup>. In both contests the number of the poets was two, and each of them exhibited three tragedies. There is no mention of a satyric play. It seems certain that the record must refer to the Lenaea, since it has been shown that at the City Dionysia the number of competitors was regularly three, and that each of them exhibited four plays. Hence it would appear that tragic contests at the Lenaea had become a regular institution by 419 B. C., and that the number of poets and tragedies was smaller than at the City Dionysia<sup>4</sup>. How long these competitions had existed previously is unknown. Arguments have been based upon the fact that in

<sup>1</sup> Demosth. Meid. § 10 καὶ ἡ ἐπὶ Ἀθηνῶν πομπὴ καὶ οἱ τραγῳδοὶ καὶ οἱ κωμῳδοί. Suidas v. τὰ ἐκ τῶν Ἀμαζῶν σκώμματα. That there were no dithyrambs at the Lenaea during the classic period is proved by the above quotation from the Meidias, and also by Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 553, which contains a list of the festivals at which dithyrambic choruses competed, viz. the City Dionysia, Thargelia, Prometheia, and Hephaesteia. The inscription in Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 1367, recording a victory at the Lenaea with a dithyramb, is of comparatively late date.

<sup>2</sup> Athen. p. 217 A.

<sup>3</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 972.

<sup>4</sup> The record shows that each poet produced three tragedies. Hence the expression in Plat. Symp. 173 A (ὅτε τῇ πρώτῃ τραγῳδίᾳ ἐνίκησεν Ἀγάθων) must merely mean 'won his first tragic victory,' and cannot be taken to denote that he competed with a single tragedy. Cp. Diod. Sic. xv. 74 δεδιδαχὸς Ἀθηναῖος τραγῳδίαν (of Dionysius' victory in 367). Here too διδάσκειν τραγῳδίαν probably means 'to compete in the tragic contests,' and proves nothing as to the number of plays exhibited by each poet in the fourth century.

the didascalie prefixed to some of the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides there is no mention of the festival at which these plays were produced. Hence it has been inferred that during the greater part of the fifth century there can only have been one festival—the City Dionysia—at which tragic competitions took place, and that tragedy must have been as yet unknown at the Lenaea; otherwise the didascalie, in recording the performance of a drama, would have mentioned the festival to which it belonged. But the conclusion is unsound. We know that there were tragic contests at the Lenaea as early as 419 B.C. But there are two notices about plays of Sophocles subsequent to this date, in which there is no mention of the festival<sup>1</sup>. Hence it cannot be argued that the omission of the festival in the tragic didascalie is any proof of the absence of tragedy from the Lenaea. All it shows is that the City Dionysia was of much more importance than the Lenaea, and that every one was supposed to know that this was the festival at which the great tragic poets were competitors.

During the fourth century there appears to have been no break in the production of new tragedies at the Lenaea. In 367 Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, won the tragic prize at this festival. Aphareus, whose dramatic career extended from 368 to 341, exhibited there on two occasions. Theodectes, the pupil and friend of Aristotle, obtained one victory at the Lenaea; and Astydamas, his contemporary, obtained seven<sup>2</sup>. As to the details of the contest during this period, and the number of poets and plays, there is no information. Probably the new dramas were preceded by an old one, as at the City Dionysia. After the fourth century all traces of tragedy at the Lenaea disappear from view. The festival is known to have been retained down to the end of the second century A.D., if not later<sup>3</sup>; but the duration of its connexion with the tragic drama is a matter of uncertainty.

<sup>1</sup> Args. to Soph. Phil. and Oed. Col., produced in 409 and 401 respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Diod. Sic. xv. 74; Plut. X orat.

839 D; Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 977 b and c.

<sup>3</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iii. 1160.



To turn next to the comic contests at the Lenaea. The date of their institution may be determined approximately from the following considerations. We have seen that such contests were introduced into the City Dionysia not later than 463, and that they appear to have existed at one or other of the two festivals as early as 487. But as comedy was the special product of the Lenaea, it was no doubt at this festival that its performances were first regularly organised. Hence the establishment of the Lenaeian competitions in comedy must be placed at any rate before 463, and probably before 487. We cannot however suppose that they go back beyond about 500 B.C., since the comic drama, at the Lenaea as well as the City Dionysia, is known to have been comparatively neglected in early times<sup>1</sup>. The first definite record of a comic contest at the Lenaea is in the year 425, when Aristophanes produced his *Acharnians*<sup>2</sup>. At this date it was the custom for three poets to take part in the competition, each exhibiting a single play<sup>3</sup>. But in the following century the number of poets was raised to five, and this became the regulation number<sup>4</sup>. In course of time, no doubt, revivals of old comedies were introduced into the Lenaea. But original comedy, as the records prove, continued to flourish there till the end of the second century B.C.<sup>5</sup> It was also apparently cultivated with no less vigour at the City Dionysia of the same period. Indeed it is evident, considering the vast number of plays which were composed by the poets of the New Comedy, and the fact that only five could be produced at one festival, that it would require not less than two festivals in the year

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. Poet. c. 5 αἱ μὲν οὖν τῆς τραγωδίας μεταβάσεις οὐ λελήθασιν, ἡ δὲ κωμῳδία διὰ τὸ μὴ σπουδάζεσθαι ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἔλαθεν· καὶ γὰρ χορὸν κωμῳδῶν ὅψε ποτε ὁ ἄρχων ἔδωκεν, ἀλλ' ἐθέλονταί ᾤσαν. It has been suggested that this notice refers only to the City Dionysia, which was managed by ὁ ἄρχων (i.e. the archon eponymus), while the technical name for the archon who managed the Lenaea was βασιλεύς. But Aristotle is clearly describing the history of comedy

in general, and not its history at any one festival.

<sup>2</sup> Arg. to *Acharn.*

<sup>3</sup> Args. to *Acharn.*, *Equit.*, *Vesp.*, *Ran.*

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 977 i-n gives a list of comic poets with their victories at the Lenaea. Two of those mentioned in m, Agathocles and Biontius, are shown by 975 d to have flourished in the middle of the second century B.C.

to give an opportunity for the production of the plays which were written. After the second century there is no further evidence as to the performances of comedy at the Lenaea.

Before leaving this part of the subject a few observations may be made concerning the comparative importance of the dramatic performances at the two festivals. The City Dionysia was of course a much grander and more splendid gathering than the Lenaea. Its superiority is shown by the fact that at the City Dionysia aliens were not allowed to take part in the choruses, and metics were forbidden to serve as choregi<sup>1</sup>. At the Lenaea there were no such prohibitions. It must have been a much greater honour for a poet to produce his plays at the City Dionysia, before the crowds of visitors and natives, than at the comparatively quiet Lenaea. This was especially the case in regard to tragedy. The great tragic poets, after their reputation was established, would confine themselves to the City Dionysia: and it is probable that the tragedies at the Lenaea were mostly the work of inferior poets, or of young and untried ones. Such slight evidence as we possess is in favour of this opinion. Sophocles obtained eighteen victories at the City Dionysia, and only two or six at the Lenaea<sup>2</sup>. Theodectes was seven times victorious at the former festival, and only once at the latter<sup>3</sup>. On the other hand, the poet Callistratus, who exhibited at the Lenaea in 418, is absolutely unknown except for the inscription which records his name<sup>4</sup>. Agathon's first successful effort was at the Lenaea<sup>5</sup>. Probably also foreign poets were in most cases confined to this festival. Thus it was at the Lenaea that Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, won his victory<sup>6</sup>. The case was not quite the same in respect to comedy. It appears that Aristophanes produced his plays indifferently at the Lenaea as well as the City Dionysia<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Plut. 954; Plut. Phoc. c. 30.

<sup>2</sup> See the Tragic Drama of the Greeks, p. 128, note 4.

<sup>3</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 977 b and c.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. ii. 972.

<sup>5</sup> Athen. p. 217 A; Plat. Symp.

173 A.

<sup>6</sup> Diod. Sic. xv. 74.

<sup>7</sup> The Acharnians, Knights, Wasps, and Frogs at the Lenaea; the Clouds, Peace, and Birds at the City Dionysia. See the Args. to these plays.

Cratinus won six Lenaeae victories, as opposed to three in the City<sup>1</sup>. It must be remembered that comedy was the great feature of the Lenaea, while tragedy was an appendage. Also the Old Comedy, with its local and personal allusions, would be best appreciated by a purely Athenian audience. It is not therefore remarkable that the leading poets of the Old Comedy should have been as anxious to exhibit at the Lenaea as at the greater festival. There is also the fact that comic poets only exhibited one play at a time. Even if they competed at both festivals in the same year, it would only involve the composition of two comedies, as opposed to the three or four tragedies of the tragic poet. Consequently a comic poet of a productive intellect would be bound to exhibit at both the festivals. But when the New Comedy, with its plots of general interest, had taken the place of the Old Comedy of personal allusion and satire, it can hardly be doubted that it was a much greater honour to exhibit at the City Dionysia than at the Lenaea. There would no longer be any advantage in the small and purely Athenian audience.

#### § 10. *The Rural Dionysia and Anthesteria.*

After the drama had been thoroughly established at Athens, the different Attic demes proceeded to institute dramatic performances at their own Rural Dionysia. These festivals were held in the month of Poseidon, corresponding to the modern December. The Dionysiac festival at the Peiraeus was celebrated on a large scale, and was a gathering of some importance. Athens herself contributed to the expenses, and supplied a large number of victims for the sacrifices. Foreign ambassadors, if present in Athens at the time, were provided with seats in the theatre as a matter of course. The proceedings consisted of a procession, in which the whole body of the Ephebi took part, and of competitions in comedy and tragedy. On one occasion Euripides brought out a new tragedy at the

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 977 d and i.

Peiraeus, and we are told that Socrates came to see it<sup>1</sup>. In addition to this festival there were performances of tragedy and comedy at Collytus; and it was here that Aeschines acted the part of Oenomaus in the play of Sophocles, whence he is styled by Demosthenes the 'rustic Oenomaus'<sup>2</sup>. Exhibitions of tragedy were of regular occurrence at Icaria, Salamis, and Eleusis, and it was customary on these occasions to make public proclamation of the crowns which had been bestowed upon deserving citizens<sup>3</sup>. At Aixone there were performances of comedies, but no mention is made of tragedies<sup>4</sup>. At Phlya there were dramatic performances, probably of both kinds<sup>5</sup>. The remains of a theatre have been discovered at Thoricus<sup>6</sup>. From these few indications, which happen to be preserved, we may infer that all the larger Attic demes had their annual dramatic spectacles. Probably it was only on very rare occasions, and at the more important gatherings, that new and original plays were brought out<sup>7</sup>. The performances were generally confined to the reproduction of dramas which had been successful in the competitions at Athens. The proceedings took the form of contests between troupes of actors, who exhibited plays of established reputation. Prizes were offered by the different demes, and companies seem to have been formed at Athens for the purpose of travelling about the country, and taking part in these provincial competitions. Aeschines was at one time tritagonist in a company of this kind, having been hired for a provincial tour by 'the ranters,' Simylus and Socrates<sup>8</sup>.

The importance of these rustic Dionysia lies in the fact that they familiarised the Athenian audience with the masterpieces of the Attic drama. In Athens itself there were not many

<sup>1</sup> Dem. Meid. § 10; Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 164, 467, 468, 741; Aelian, Var. Hist. ii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. de Cor. § 180; Aesch. Timarch. § 157.

<sup>3</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iv. 1282 b, 1285 b (Icaria); *ibid.* ii. 469, 470, 594 (Salamis); *ibid.* iv. 574 b, c, g (Eleusis).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 585.

<sup>5</sup> Isaeus, orat. viii. § 15.

<sup>6</sup> Dörpfeld and Reisch, Griechische Theater, p. 109 foll.

<sup>7</sup> In addition to the instance at the Peiraeus recorded above, the only other known example is at Salamis (Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 470 Διονυσίων τῶν ἐν Σαλαμῖνι τραγῳδῶν τ[ὴ] καὶ κωμ[ῶ]ν ἀγ[ῶνι]), if the restoration be correct.

<sup>8</sup> Dem. de Cor. § 262.

opportunities of seeing old plays. The great Athenian festivals in early times were mainly restricted to the production of new compositions. Yet the fact that the audience was thoroughly acquainted with the older dramas is proved by the constant parodies in Aristophanes—parodies which would have been meaningless and insipid except to spectators who knew the originals. Such knowledge was acquired at the Rural Dionysia. The audience in the Athenian theatre consisted partly of the inhabitants of Athens, partly of the citizens from the country districts of Attica. For the natives of Athens there were the festivals of the adjoining demes, such as Collytus, Peiraeus, and Salamis; for the citizens of the remoter townships there were their own local gatherings. In this way then we can see that the whole body of the spectators would be enabled to witness, over and over again, the dramas which had proved most attractive on the Athenian stage.

As for the Anthesteria, the only Athenian festival of Dionysus which has not yet been considered, its connexion with the theatre is so insignificant that a very brief description will suffice. At this festival there were no regular performances of drama, but only certain competitions between comic actors. Our knowledge of these competitions is derived from a rather obscure statement about the orator Lysurgus, who is said to have re-introduced an old custom which had latterly fallen into disuse. This custom appears to have been as follows. At the Chytri, the last day of the Anthesteria, a contest between comic protagonists was held in the theatre, and the protagonist who was victorious was allowed the undisputed right of acting at the forthcoming City Dionysia<sup>1</sup>. The Chytri took place about a month before the City Dionysia. Of course the privilege of acting as protagonist at the City Dionysia was a very considerable one. There were only five comedies performed,

<sup>1</sup> This appears to be the meaning of the passage in Plut. X orat. 841 F εισηγετο δὲ καὶ νόμους, τὸν περὶ τῶν καμωδῶν ἀγῶνα τοῖς Χύτριοις ἐπιτελεῖν ἐφάμιλλον ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ, καὶ τὸν νικῆσαντα εἰς ἄστυ καταλέγεσθαι, πρότερον

οὐκ ἐξόν, ἀναλαμβάνων τὸν ἀγῶνα ἐκ-  
λελοιπότα. The contest is plainly the  
same as the ἀγῶνες Χύτρινοι quoted  
from Philochorus by the Scholiast on  
Aristoph. Ran. 220.

and consequently only five protagonists would be required. There would naturally be a keen competition among the comic actors of the time to get themselves selected among the five. The victor in this contest at the Chytroi was selected as a matter of course. There is nothing to show what the nature of the contest was; but most likely it consisted in the recitation of selected portions of a comedy. This competition between comic actors is the only instance to be found, before the Christian era, of a dramatic entertainment at the Anthesteria. In later times, during the first century A.D., we hear of 'tragic monodies' and 'comic parabases' being exhibited at the same festival<sup>1</sup>. But these semi-lyrical performances are of no importance in the history of the theatre.

### § II. *The Judges.*

The institution of the dramatic contests at the different Attic festivals has now been described in detail. As regards the management of the competition many points still remain to be considered, viz. the selection of the judges, the mode of giving the verdict, the prizes for poets and actors, and the public records of the results. First as to the judges. The number of the judges in the comic contests was five<sup>2</sup>. The number in the tragic contests was probably the same, but there is no direct evidence upon the subject. The selection of the judges was a most elaborate affair, and consisted of a combination of two principles, that of election by vote, and that of appointment by lot. A large preliminary list of judges was first elected by vote. At the beginning of the contest a second list of ten judges was chosen by lot from the first one. At the end of the contest a third list of five judges was selected by lot from the second list, and these five judges decided the result of the competition. The object of all these elaborate arrangements and precautions was to make the names of the actual judges a matter of uncertainty as long as possible, and to prevent them from being tampered with by the partisans

<sup>1</sup> Philostrat. Vit. Apoll. p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Aves, 445; Suidas v. ἐν πέντε κριτῶν γόνασι.

of the different competitors. The details of the whole process were as follows<sup>1</sup>. Several days before the actual commence-

<sup>1</sup> There is no consecutive account in any ancient writer of the mode of selecting the judges and of voting. Our knowledge of the subject has to be pieced together from the three following passages: (1) Plut. Cim. p. 483 E' ἔθεντο δ' εἰς μνήμην αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν τῶν τραγωδῶν κρίσιν ὀνομαστὴν γενομένην. πρώτην γὰρ διδασκαλίαν τοῦ Σοφοκλέους ἔτι νέου καθέντος, Ἀφειφίων ὁ ἄρχων, φιλονεικίας οὕσης καὶ παρατάξεως τῶν θεατῶν, κριτὰς μὲν οὐκ ἐκλήρωσε τοῦ ἀγῶνος, ὡς δὲ Κίμων μετὰ τῶν συστρατήγων προελθὼν εἰς τὸ θέατρον ἐποιήσατο τῷ θεῷ τὰς νενομισμένας σπονδὰς, οὐκ ἀφῆκεν αὐτοὺς ἀπελθεῖν, ἀλλ' ὀρκώσας ἡνάγκασε καθίσαι καὶ κρῖναι δέκα ὄντας, ἀπὸ φυλῆς μιᾶς ἕκαστον. (2) Isocrat. xvii. § 33 Πυθόδωρον γὰρ τὸν σκηνίτην καλούμενον, ὃς ὑπὲρ Πασώνων ἅπαντα καὶ λέγει καὶ πράττει, τίς οὐκ οἶδεν ἡμῶν πέρυσιν ἀνοίξαντα τὰς ὑδρίας καὶ τοὺς κριτὰς ἐξεύχοντα τοὺς ὑπὸ τῆς βουλῆς εἰσβληθέντας; καίτοι ὅστις μικρῶν ἔνεκα καὶ περὶ τοῦ σάματος κινδυνεύων ταύτας ὑπανόγειν ἐτόλμησεν, αἱ σεσημασμέναι μὲν ἦσαν ὑπὸ τῶν πρυτάνεων, κατεσφραγισμέναι δ' ὑπὸ τῶν χορηγῶν, ἐφυλάττοντο δ' ὑπὸ τῶν ταμιῶν, ἔκειντο δ' ἐν ἀκροπόλει, τί δεῖ θαυμάζειν εἰ κ.τ.λ. (3) Lysias iv. § 3 ἐβουλόμην δ' ἂν μὴ ἀπολαχεῖν αὐτὸν κριτὴν Διονυσίους, ἐν ἡμῶν φανερός ἐγένετο ἐμοὶ διηλλαγμένος, κρίνας τὴν ἐμὴν φυλὴν νικᾶν. νῦν δὲ ἔγραψε μὲν ταῦτα εἰς τὸ γράμματιόν, ἀπέλαχε δέ. καὶ ὅτι ἀληθῆ ταῦτα λέγω Φιλίνος καὶ Διοκλῆς ἴσασιν· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστ' αὐτοῖς μαρτυρῆσαι μὴ διομοσαμένους περὶ τῆς αἰτίας ἧς ἐγὼ φεύγω, ἐπεὶ σαφῶς ἔγνωτ' ἂν ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἦμεν αὐτὸν οἱ κριτὴν ἐμβαλόντες, καὶ ἡμῶν εἵνεκα ἐκαθέζετο. The first of these passages refers to a dramatic contest, the third to a dithyrambic one. It is uncertain to which the second refers. But there is no reason to suppose (with Oehmichen, Bühnenwesen, p. 206) that the mode of selecting the judges was different in the dramatic and the dithyrambic contests.

That there were ten urns for the names on the preliminary list of judges is inferred from the plural ὑδρίαί in Isocrates. That a second list of judges was appointed by lot from the larger list *before* the commencement of each contest, and that this second list consisted of ten persons, one from each of the ten tribes, seems to be proved by the words of Plutarch, κριτὰς μὲν οὐκ ἐκλήρωσε τοῦ ἀγῶνος . . . ἀπὸ φυλῆς μιᾶς ἕκαστον. That there was another selection of judges by lot *after* the contest, and that the number of judges who actually decided the result was smaller than the number of those who sat through the performance and voted, is proved by two expressions in the above passages: (1) ἔγραψε μὲν ταῦτα εἰς τὸ γράμματιόν, ἀπέλαχε δέ, i. e. he voted in my favour, but his vote was not drawn; (2) ἡμῶν εἵνεκα ἐκαθέζετο. Καθίζειν and καθέζεσθαι were the regular words used of a judge at a contest. It is clear therefore that the person here referred to sat through the performance as a judge, but that after the performance was over his vote was not drawn by lot.

The above conclusions are those of Petersen (Preisrichter der grossen Dionysien). Mommsen (Bursian's Jahresbericht, lii. pp. 354-358) raises some objections. He suggests (1) that the plural ὑδρίαί is merely rhetorical, and that there was only one urn for all the names, (2) that the selection of a second list of judges *before* the contest is not mentioned by Lysias, and was probably a fiction of Plutarch's. It may be replied that Lysias had no occasion to refer to this preliminary ballot. He was not giving an account of the entire system of judging, and therefore only mentioned the points which enforced his argument. Still it must be confessed that the evidence about the judges is very fragmentary, and that Petersen's scheme depends largely on conjecture.

ment of the festival the Council, assisted by the choregi, drew up the preliminary list of judges. A certain number of names were selected from each of the ten tribes of Attica. The different choregi, as was natural, endeavoured to get their own partisans upon the list. The names of the persons chosen were then inscribed upon tablets, and the tablets were placed in ten urns, each urn containing the names belonging to a single tribe. The urns were then carefully locked up and sealed in the presence of the prytanes and choregi, handed over to the custody of the treasurers, and deposited in the Acropolis. The preliminary list of judges was kept a secret from every one except the Council and the choregi. The penalty for tampering with the urns was death. It is not known from what class the nominees were selected, or whether any property qualification was necessary. Obviously the judges in the dramatic and dithyrambic contests had a very delicate office to perform. If their verdict was to be of value, it was necessary that they should be men of culture and discernment. It is most likely therefore that there was some limitation upon the number of persons qualified to act in this capacity.

Until the time of the festival the preliminary list of citizens remained sealed up in urns in the Acropolis. On the first day of the competitions the ten urns were produced in the theatre, and placed in some prominent position. The persons whose names were contained in the urns were all present in the theatre. Probably they received a special summons from the archon shortly before the festival. At the commencement of the contest the archon proceeded to draw a single name from all the urns in succession. The ten persons, whose names were drawn, constituted the second list of judges, and each of them represented one of the ten tribes of Attica. After being selected by lot in the manner described, they were called forward by the archon, and took a solemn oath that they would give an impartial verdict<sup>1</sup>. They were then conducted to seats specially

<sup>1</sup> Dem. Meid. § 17 ὁμνύουσι παρῆσθη-  
κώς τοῖς κριταῖς. Aristoph. Eccles. 1163

μὴ 'πιορκεῖν, ἀλλὰ κρίνειν τοὺς χοροὺς  
ὁρθῶς ἀεί.



appointed for them, and the contest began<sup>1</sup>. At the end of the performances each of them gave his vote, writing upon a tablet the names of the competitors in order of merit<sup>2</sup>. These tablets, ten in number, were then placed in an urn, and the archon proceeded to draw forth five of them at random. The result of the competition was decided in accordance with these five lists, and the persons whose tablets were drawn from the urn constituted the ultimate body of five judges. It thus appears that up to the very last the judges who recorded their votes were not sure whether the votes would eventually have effect, or turn out to be so much waste paper. This uncertainty was of course a great obstacle to intimidation and bribery. After the competition was over, and the verdict announced, the names of the five judges, whose votes had decided the day, were not kept secret. It was known how each of them had voted. But the other votes, which had been recorded but not drawn from the urn, were destroyed without being made public<sup>3</sup>. It was naturally considered a much greater honour to win a victory by the unanimous vote of all five judges, than by a mere majority of one<sup>4</sup>. But it is very doubtful whether any public record was kept of the number of votes by which a victory was gained.

Whether the decision of the judges was generally given with discernment, and how far it corresponded with the ultimate verdict of posterity, is a question of some interest. Both Aeschylus and Sophocles were usually successful, and this speaks highly for the taste of the judges. Aeschylus won thirteen victories; and as he produced four plays on each occasion, it follows that no less than fifty-two of his plays

<sup>1</sup> Special seats were assigned to the judges at Alexandria, and no doubt the Attic custom was followed there: cp. Vitruv. vii. praef. § 5 cum secretae sedes iudicibus essent distributae.

<sup>2</sup> Aelian Var. Hist. ii. 13 καὶ προσέταττον τοῖς κριταῖς ἀνωθεν Ἀριστοφάνην ἀλλὰ μὴ ἄλλον γράφειν. Lysias iv. 3 ἔγραψε μὲν ταῦτα ἐς τὸ γράμματειον.

<sup>3</sup> This follows from Lysias iv. § 3

ἐβουλόμην δ' ἂν μὴ ἀπολαχεῖν αὐτὸν κριτὴν Διονυσίοις, ἵν' ὑμῖν φανερός ἐγένετο ἔμοι διηλλαγμένος, κρίνας τὴν ἐμὴν φυλὴν νικᾶν· νῦν δὲ ἔγραψε μὲν ταῦτα εἰς τὸ γράμματειον, ἀπέλαχε δέ.

<sup>4</sup> Aristoph. Aves 445-447 XO. δμνυμ' ἐπὶ τούτοις πᾶσι νικᾶν τοῖς κριταῖς | καὶ τοῖς θεαταῖς πᾶσιν. ΠΕ. ἔσται ταυταγί. | XO. εἰ δὲ παραβαίην, ἐνὶ κριτῇ νικᾶν μόνον.

obtained the first prize. Whether the total number of his plays was seventy or ninety, the proportion of victories was very large<sup>1</sup>. Sophocles was equally fortunate. He won eighteen victories at the City Dionysia, and at least two at the Lenaea<sup>2</sup>. The number of his plays, as given by different authorities, varies from a hundred-and-four to a hundred-and-thirty<sup>3</sup>. Thus on the lowest estimate considerably more than half his plays gained the first position. Euripides was not so successful. He only won five victories, though he wrote between ninety and a hundred plays<sup>4</sup>. The cause of his failure was partly due to the fact that he often had the misfortune to contend against Sophocles. He was beaten by Sophocles in 438 and 431, and probably on many other occasions of which no record has been preserved<sup>5</sup>. But at other times he was defeated by very inferior poets. In 415 he was beaten by Xenocles, and on another occasion by the obscure poet Nicomachus<sup>6</sup>. But the most surprising verdict of which there is any record is the defeat of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles by Philocles the nephew of Aeschylus<sup>7</sup>. Of course the other three plays, along with which the *Oedipus Tyrannus* was produced, may not have been of equal merit. Still it must always seem an extraordinary fact, and a proof of the uncertainty of Athenian judges, that a play which is generally allowed to be one of the greatest dramas of antiquity should have been defeated by a third-rate poet such as Philocles.

Verdicts of this indefensible character might be due to various causes. The judges might be corrupt or might be intimidated. The spirit of emulation ran very high at these contests, and men were often not very particular as to the means by which they obtained the victory. There is an instance in one of the speeches of Lysias. The defendant is showing that the prosecutor had been on very friendly terms with him a short time before. The proof he brings forward is that when he was

<sup>1</sup> Vita Aeschyli; Suidas v. *Αἰσχύλος*.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> The number of his plays is given as 123 by Suidas, and as 104 or 130 in the Life.

<sup>4</sup> Vita Eur.

<sup>5</sup> Args. to Eur. *Alcestis* and *Medea*.

<sup>6</sup> Aelian Var. Hist. ii. 8; Suidas v. *Νικόμαχος*.

<sup>7</sup> Arg. to Soph. *Oed. Tyr.*

choregus at the City Dionysia, he got the prosecutor appointed on the preliminary list of judges for the express purpose of voting for his own chorus. The prosecutor was pledged to vote for the chorus of the defendant, whether it was good or bad. He appears to have actually done so; but unfortunately, at the final drawing, his name was not selected, and his vote was therefore of no value<sup>1</sup>. Another example of the use of corruption is afforded by the case of Meidias, who is said to have won the victory with his chorus of men at the City Dionysia by bribing or intimidating the judges<sup>2</sup>. Similarly at a contest of boys' choruses, Alcibiades, in spite of his outrageous conduct on the occasion, won the first prize, because some of the judges were afraid to vote against him, and others had been bought over to his side<sup>3</sup>. The verdict of each individual judge was made public. Hence it is easy to see that judges might often be afraid to incur the hostility of rich and unscrupulous citizens by voting against them. The above instances all refer to dithyrambic contests. No doubt in these cases, as the whole tribe was concerned with the result, party feeling ran exceptionally high. In the dramatic competitions only individuals were engaged, and there was less general excitement about the result. Yet even here corrupt influences were sometimes employed. Menander, the greatest comic poet of his time, was often defeated by Philemon owing to jobbery and intrigue similar to that described above<sup>4</sup>.

One not unfrequent cause then of unfair verdicts must have been corruption and intimidation. There is also another point to be kept in view, in estimating the value of the decisions of the ancient judges. The plays of Sophocles and Euripides were no doubt immeasurably superior, as literary works, to the plays of Philocles, Xenocles, and Nicomachus, by which they were defeated. And yet in these and similar instances the verdicts of the judges may perhaps have had some justification. One is apt to forget the importance of the manner in which

<sup>1</sup> Lysias iv. § 3.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. Meid. §§ 5, 17, 65.

<sup>3</sup> Andocid. Alcibiad. § 20 ἀλλὰ τῶν

κριτῶν οἱ μὲν φοβούμενοι οἱ δὲ χαριζόμενοι  
νικᾶν ἔκριναν αὐτόν.

<sup>4</sup> Aul. Gell. N. A. 17. 4.

the play was presented upon the stage. Even in modern times an inferior play, if well mounted and acted, is more impressive than a good play badly performed. This must have been still more the case in the ancient drama, where the singing and dancing of the chorus formed such an important element in the success of the performance. It can easily be seen that, however well a play was written, if it was ill-mounted, and if the chorus was badly trained, this would greatly diminish the chances of success. Now the ancient poet was dependent upon his choregus for the mounting of the piece and for the selection of the chorus. If the choregus was rich and generous, the play was put upon the stage in the very best manner, with all the advantages of fine dresses and a well-trained chorus. An ambitious choregus spared no pains to do his part of the work thoroughly. But if the choregus was a miserly man, he tried to do the thing as cheaply as possible. He hired inferior singers, and cut down the prices of the dresses and other accessories. Hence the success of a play depended nearly as much upon the choregus as upon the poet. Several examples illustrate this fact. Demosthenes, shortly before his death, is said to have dreamt that he was acting in a tragedy in a contest with Archias; but although he was highly successful, and produced a great impression upon the audience, he was defeated in the contest because of the wretched manner in which the play was mounted upon the stage<sup>1</sup>. Then there is the case of Nicias. He was a man of great wealth, but not of commanding talents. Accordingly he tried to win popularity by the magnificence with which he performed his duties as choregus. The result was that he obtained the victory in every competition in which he engaged<sup>2</sup>. Antisthenes is another instance of a rich choregus who, although he knew nothing about music and poetry, was always successful in his contests, because he spared no expense in the preparations<sup>3</sup>. There is an example of a different kind of choregus in one of the

<sup>1</sup> Plut. Demosth. 859 D *εὐημερῶν δὲ καὶ κατέχων τὸ θέατρον ἐνδεία παρασκευῆς καὶ χορηγίας κρατεῖσθαι.*

<sup>2</sup> Id. Nicias, 524 D.

<sup>3</sup> Xen. Memor. iii. 4 3.

speeches of Isaeus. A certain Dicaeogenes regarded his office of choregus merely as a burden, and tried to perform it in the most economical manner. The consequence was that he was always unsuccessful. He engaged in a dithyrambic and tragic contest, and in a contest of pyrrhic dancers. On the first occasion he was last but one, on the other two occasions he was last<sup>1</sup>. Obviously the tragic poet who had the misfortune to be associated with Dicaeogenes would have a very small chance of success. The above examples show very clearly that the money of the choregus was almost as important towards securing victory as the genius of the poet.

It is necessary therefore, in criticising the verdicts of the Athenian judges, to remember that we know nothing of the circumstances of the different performances, and of the extent to which the choregus may have been responsible for success or failure. Possibly if all the facts were known in regard to the occasions when Sophocles and Euripides were defeated, it would be found that there was some justification. The best critics would attend mainly to the merits of the piece in itself, apart from the splendour of the accompaniments. But the mass of the spectators would be dazzled by gorgeous dresses and effective singing and dancing. And the mass of the spectators had a great deal to do with the verdict. If they were strongly in favour of a particular poet, it was difficult for the judges to act in opposition to their wishes. The judges were liable to prosecution and imprisonment, if their verdict was supposed to be unjust; and the case would be tried before a jury chosen from the very audience which they had thwarted<sup>2</sup>. It was hardly therefore to be expected that they would venture to give a verdict in opposition to the loudly pronounced opinion of the multitude. That the multitude on occasions made their wishes known most emphatically, and brought great pressure to bear upon the judges, is shown by Aelian's account of the first performance of the *Clouds*. The story is a fable, but is interesting as an illustration of the occasional behaviour of an Athenian audience. It is said that the people were so delighted

<sup>1</sup> Isaeus v. § 36.

<sup>2</sup> Aeschin. Ctesiph. § 232.

with the Clouds, that they applauded the poet more than they had ever done before, and insisted on the judges placing the name of Aristophanes first upon the list<sup>1</sup>. Such unanimous expressions of opinion on the part of the spectators could hardly be resisted by judges who had the fear of prosecution before their eyes. Plato laments on several occasions the despotism exercised by the audience in the theatre. In former times, he says, the verdict was not decided by 'hisses and unmusical shouts, as at the present day, nor by applause and clapping of hands,' but the rabble were compelled by the attendants to keep quiet. In another place he says that the judge should be the instructor, not the pupil, of the audience, and should refuse to be intimidated by their shouts into giving a false verdict. But at the present day, he adds, the decision rests with the multitude, and is practically decided by public vote, and the result is the degeneracy of poets and spectators alike<sup>2</sup>. These passages of Plato prove how much the judges were under the dominion of the audience; and a general audience would be especially likely to be carried away by the splendour of the choregic part of the exhibition, by the music, dancing, and scenery. But on the whole, in spite of occasional cases of corruption, and in spite of the despotism of the multitude, one would be inclined to say, arguing from results, that the judges performed their duties well. The best proof of their fairness lies in the continued success of Aeschylus and Sophocles.

### § 12. *The Prizes.*

When the contest was ended, and the decision of the judges had been announced, the names of the victorious poet and of his choregus were publicly proclaimed by the herald, and they were crowned with garlands of ivy in the presence of the spectators. The crowning probably took place upon the stage, and was performed by the archon<sup>3</sup>. There is no mention of

<sup>1</sup> Aelian Var. Hist. ii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Plato, Legg. 700 C-701 A, 659 A-C.

<sup>3</sup> Alciphron ii. 3; Plut. An seni &c.

p. 785 B; Athen. p. 217 A στεφανοῦται Ἀναλίσ ; Aristid. vol. ii. p. 2 (Dindf.) τοῦτον στεφανοῦν καὶ πρῶτον ἀναγορεύειν.

any special prize for the choregus, in addition to the honour of the crown and the public proclamation of his victory. It is often stated that the successful choregus received a tripod from the State, which he was expected to erect upon a monument in some public place, with an inscription recording his victory. But this was only the case in the dithyrambic contests. In these contests each choregus appeared as the representative of one of the ten tribes of Attica; the tripod which he received belonged really to the tribe, and was intended to serve as a tribal monument<sup>1</sup>. The dramatic choregi had no such representative character, nor were they provided with any memorial of victory by the State.

As to the rewards for the poets, the tradition was that in the earliest times the prize for tragedy was a goat, the prize for comedy a basket of figs and a jar of wine<sup>2</sup>. After the dramatic contests had been regularly organised, each of the competing poets received a payment of money from the State, differing no doubt in amount, according to the place he gained in the competition<sup>3</sup>. Nothing is known as to the value of these prizes. But as the ancient dramatist had not only to write his plays, but also to superintend their production, the demands upon his time and energy must have been very great, and the rewards would be correspondingly large. Some idea of the scale on which the amounts were graduated, according to the place of each poet in the competition, may be gathered from the analogy of the dithyrambic contests instituted by Lycurgus in the Peiraeus. In these contests not less than three choruses were to take part, and the prizes were to be ten minae for the first chorus, eight for the second, and six

<sup>1</sup> Dem. Meid. § 5; Lysias xxi. § 2; Schol. Aeschin. Timarch. § 11; Isaeus vii. § 40; 2nd Arg. to Dem. Meid. p. 510. The monuments of Lysicrates and Thrasyllus, which were surmounted with tripods (Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, vol. i. chap. iv. pt. 3, vol. ii. p. 31), were in honour of victories with dithyrambic choruses; cp. Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 1242, 1247.

<sup>2</sup> Marmor Par. epp. 39, 43.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 367 τῶν μισθῶν τῶν κωμῶδων ἐμείωσαν; Eccles. 102 τὸν μισθὸν τῶν ποιητῶν συνέτεμε; Hesych. v. μισθός· τὸ ἐπαθλον τῶν κωμικῶν . . . ἑμμισθοὶ δὲ πέντε ἦσαν. As the competitors in comedy were five, this last passage proves that *all* the competing poets received a reward of money.

for the third<sup>1</sup>. The payment of the dramatic poets was probably arranged in a somewhat similar proportion. Towards the end of the fifth century the prizes were reduced in amount by certain commissioners of the Treasury, named Archinus and Agyrrhius. Accordingly in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes these two statesmen are placed in the list of bad men who are not allowed to join the chorus of the initiated<sup>2</sup>. The fact that all of the competing poets received a reward of money need cause no astonishment. They were the poets chosen, after selection, to provide the entertainment at the annual festivals. They were not selected until their plays had been carefully examined by the archon, and found to be of the requisite merit. To be allowed to exhibit at all was a considerable distinction. There was nothing dishonourable for an ordinary poet in being placed last in the competition. No doubt, for one of the great dramatic writers such a position was regarded as a disgrace. When Aristophanes was third, it is spoken of as a distinct rebuff<sup>3</sup>. But to obtain the second place was always creditable. It is mentioned as a proof of the greatness of Sophocles that he 'obtained twenty victories and was often second.' When he was defeated for the first place by Philocles, the disgrace consisted, not in his being second, but in his being beaten by such an inferior poet<sup>4</sup>. At the same time to be second was never regarded as a 'victory.' The title of victor was reserved for the first poet. This is proved by the passage about Sophocles just quoted, and also by the fact that in the list of victors at the City Dionysia only the names of the first poets in the tragic and comic contests are enumerated<sup>5</sup>. It is clearly owing to an error that the second poet is sometimes spoken of as a victor<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Plut. X orat. 842 A.

<sup>2</sup> Aristoph. *Ran.* 367, and Schol. ad loc.

<sup>3</sup> Arg. Aristoph. *Nub.*

<sup>4</sup> Vit. Soph.; Aristid. vol. ii. p. 344 (Dindf.)

<sup>5</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 971 a-e, iv. 971 f-h.

<sup>6</sup> Arg. Aristoph. *Vesp.* ἐνίκα πρῶτος Φιλανίδης. Arg. *Nub.* ὅτε Κρατῖνος μὲν ἐνίκα Πυτίνην, Ἀμφίβιας δὲ Κόνωνο. Arg. *Pax* ἐνίκησε δὲ τῷ δράματι ὁ ποιητὴς . . . δεύτερος Ἀριστοφάνης Εἰρήνην.



§ 13. *Contests between actors.*

In addition to the rewards just mentioned, prizes for acting were instituted in later times. At first the principal competitors in the dramatic contests were the choregus and the poet. Upon their efforts the success of a play mainly depended. It was to them that the rewards of victory were assigned, and it was their names which were recorded in the public monuments. But as time went on the profession of the actor gradually increased in importance. Eventually the success of a play came to depend principally upon the actors. The competition was extended to them. A prize was offered for the most successful actor as well as for the most successful poet. The name of the victorious actors began to be recorded in the official lists. As regards the date of these innovations the following facts may be gathered from existing monuments. At the City Dionysia contests between tragic actors were established for the first time about the year 455 B.C.<sup>1</sup> Contests between comic actors were unknown at this festival during the fifth and fourth centuries<sup>2</sup>. In the second century they seem to have become a regular institution, but nothing can be ascertained concerning the intervening period<sup>3</sup>. At the Lenaea, contests between tragic actors can be traced back as far as 420 B.C., and contests between comic actors as far as 354<sup>4</sup>. But as there are no Lenaeian records about tragedy and comedy previous to these two dates, it is impossible to say for how long a time the two kinds of contest had already existed. The general result, however, of the above evidence is to confirm the statement of Aristotle as to the comparative unimportance of comedy in early times<sup>5</sup>. While in tragedy actors' contests were introduced into both festivals

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iv. 971 f.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 971 a-e, iv. 971 f-h. Hence Rose's ingenious emendation of the conclusion to the second Arg. to the Pax—τὸ δὲ δράμα ὑπεκρίνατο Ἀπολλόδωρος, ἦνίκα ἐρμῆν λοικοκρότης [ἐνίκα Ἑρμῆν ὁ ὑποκριτής Rose]—must be rejected, as the Pax was produced at

the City Dionysia.

<sup>3</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 975 (probably the City Dionysia).

<sup>4</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 972. The mention of the victorious actor's name shows that the comic list in this inscription, like the tragic, must refer to the Lenaea.

<sup>5</sup> Poet. c. 5.

about the middle of the fifth century, in comedy they are not found before the fourth century, and then only at the Lenaea.

These contests were limited to the principal actors or protagonists in each play. The subordinate actors, the deuteragonist and tritagonist, had nothing to do with them. The principal actor in a Greek play was a much more important personage than even the 'star' in a modern company. The actors in a Greek play were limited to three in number, and each of them had to play several parts in succession, by means of changes in dress and mask. Hence the protagonist had to perform not only the principal part, but also several of the subordinate ones. Besides this, the composition of most Greek tragedies was designed with the express purpose of bringing out into strong relief the character of the principal personage. The incidents were intended to draw forth his different emotions: the subordinate characters were so many foils to him. As a consequence, the success of a Greek play depended almost wholly upon the protagonist. In the ordinary language of the times he was said to 'act the play,' as if the other performers were of no importance. To take an example from existing inscriptions, it is recorded that in 341 'Astydamas was victorious with the Parthenopaeus, acted by Thessalus, and the Lycaon, acted by Neoptolemus<sup>1</sup>.' This is the regular form of the old records both in tragedy and comedy. Demosthenes uses similar language. Referring to the Phoenix of Euripides, he says that 'Theodorus and Aristodemus never acted this play.' The form of the language is proof of the overwhelming importance of the protagonist<sup>2</sup>. These considerations will remove any surprise which might have been felt at the fact of the contest in acting being confined solely to the principal actor in each play. As to the nature of the contest, the only other point to be noticed is that the success of the actor was quite independent of the success of the play in which he was performing. Thus in one of the comic contests of the second century the prize for acting was won by Onesimus. But the play in which he acted, the Shipwrecked Mariner, only won

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 973.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. Fals. Leg. § 246.

the second place. The successful comedy, the *Ephesians*, was acted by *Sophilus*. Similarly in the tragic contests of the year 418 the prize for acting was won by *Callippides*; but the poet *Callistratus*, whose three tragedies he performed, was only second. The tragedies of the successful poet were acted by *Lysicrates*<sup>1</sup>.

The actors' contests which we have hitherto been describing took place at the performance of new tragedies and comedies, and existed side by side with contests between poets and choregi. But there were other occasions in which actors met in competition. The reproduction of old plays generally took the form of contests between actors. These contests were of two kinds. In the first kind each actor performed a different play. At the same time the victory was decided, not by the merits of the play, but by the skill of the actor. There are several references to competitions of this sort. For instance, before the battle of *Arginusae*, *Thrasyllus* is said to have dreamt that he was engaged in a contest in the theatre at Athens, and that he and his fellow-generals were acting the *Phoenissae* of *Euripides*, while their opponents were acting the *Supplices*<sup>2</sup>. The most frequent occasion for reproductions of old plays in this manner must have been afforded by the Rural Dionysia in the different townships of Attica. The dramatic performances at these festivals were mostly confined, as we have already seen, to the exhibition of old tragedies and comedies. The town offered a prize for acting, and the leading Athenian actors came down with their companies and took part in the contest, each performing a different play. But at the great Athenian festivals, the *Lenaea* and the *City Dionysia*, there are no traces of such competitions to be found in the records. They may have been introduced in late times; but during the more flourishing period of the drama, when the older poets were reproduced at these festivals, one play seems to have been considered sufficient<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 975 b, 972.

<sup>2</sup> Diod. Sic. xiii. 97.

<sup>3</sup> For the *City Dionysia* see above, pp. 27 and 33. For the *Lenaea* there

is no evidence, but the practice was probably much the same. See pp. 40 and 41.

The first then of the two kinds of competitions with old plays was of the character just described. Each actor performed a different play. The second kind differed from the first in this respect, that each actor performed the same play. For instance, Licymnius, the tragic actor, is said to have defeated Critias and Hippasus in the Propompi of Aeschylus. Andronicus, another tragic actor, was successful in the Epigoni on one occasion; and it is implied that his opponents acted the same play<sup>1</sup>. In contests of this description it is not probable that the whole play was acted by each of the competitors, but only special portions of it. The contest would be useful for purposes of selection. When the custom arose of prefacing the performances of new tragedies and new comedies by the reproduction of an ancient drama, it would be necessary for the state to choose the actor who was to manage the reproduction. Very probably the selection was made by a competition of the kind we are describing, in which a portion of an old play was performed by each of the candidates. The contests between comic actors at the Chytri have already been referred to<sup>2</sup>. Most likely they were of the same description.

#### § 14. *Records of dramatic contests.*

It is difficult in modern times to fully realise the keenness of the interest with which the various dramatic contests were regarded by the old Athenians, and the value which was attached to victories obtained in them. The greatest statesman was proud to be successful with a chorus in tragedy or comedy. It was a proof both of his taste and of his munificence. The tragic poet held as high a place in the popular estimation as the orator or the general. Victorious competitors were not content with the mere temporary glory they obtained. Every care was taken to perpetuate the memory of their success

<sup>1</sup> Alciphron iii. 48 κακὸς κακῶς ἀπὸ-  
λοιτο καὶ ἄφρων εἴη Λικύμνιος ὁ τῆς  
τραγωδίας ὑποκριτής, ὡς γὰρ ἐνέικα τοὺς  
ἀντιτέχνους Κριτίαν τὸν Κλεωναῖον καὶ  
Ἱππασσον τὸν Ἀμβρακιώτην τοὺς Δισχύ-

λου Προπομπούς κ.τ.λ. Athen. p. 584 D  
'Ανδρονίκου δὲ τοῦ τραγωδοῦ ἀπ' ἀγῶνός  
τινος, ἐν ᾧ τοὺς Ἐπιγόνους εὐημερῆκει,  
πίνειν μέλλοντος παρ' αὐτῇ κ.τ.λ.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 45.

in a permanent form. Elaborate records were also erected by the state. A description of the various kinds of memorials, of which fragments have been preserved, will be a convincing proof of the enthusiasm with which the drama was regarded in ancient times.

First, as to the private monuments. These were erected by the victorious choregi, and appear to have differed widely in style and costliness, according to the wealth and taste of the individuals. Thus the mean man in Theophrastus, when he had been successful with a tragic chorus, was content to erect a mere wooden scroll in commemoration of his victory<sup>1</sup>. Another cheap device was to dedicate some article of theatrical costume, such as an actor's mask<sup>2</sup>. But the ordinary form of memorial, in the case of the dramatic contests, consisted of a marble tablet, containing a painting or sculptured relief<sup>3</sup>. At first, no doubt, these tablets were of small size and simple workmanship; but in course of time, with the growth of luxurious habits, they began to assume a more elaborate form. For instance, the monument set up by Xenocles in 306 was about fourteen feet high, the tablet being enclosed in a magnificent architectural structure, with columns and entablature<sup>4</sup>. The paintings and reliefs upon the tablets were no less variable. Some of them depicted masks, or crowns of victory, or similar emblems; others contained representations of Dionysus or Silenus. Sometimes groups of figures were portrayed, such as a chorus of singers with the choregus in the centre. Sometimes a scene was inserted from the tragedy or comedy in which the victory had been obtained<sup>5</sup>. But though the tablets differed in magnificence, the inscriptions upon them were generally simple and concise, and consisted merely of the names of the poet and choregus, and of the archon for the year, with the addition in later times of the name of the actor.

<sup>1</sup> Theophrast. Char. 22 ταινία ξυλίνη.

<sup>2</sup> Lysias xxi. § 4 καμφοδοῖς χορηγῶν  
Κηφισοδώρῳ ἐνίκων, καὶ ἀνήλωσα σὺν τῇ  
τῆς σκευῆς ἀναθέσει ἐκκαίδεκα μνᾶς.

<sup>3</sup> Plut. Themist. 114 C πίνακα τῆς  
νίκης ἀνέθηκε. Aristot. Pol. viii. 6 ἐκ

τοῦ πίνακος ὃν ἀνέθηκε Θράσιππος.

<sup>4</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 1289; Bull. Corr.  
Hell. iii. pl. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Reisch, Griechische Weihgeschenke,  
p. 118 ff.

The record inscribed by Themistocles in honour of his tragic victory in 476 ran as follows<sup>1</sup> :—

Choregus, Themistocles of Phrearria :  
 Poet, Phrynichus :  
 Archon, Adeimantus.

As regard public memorials, we can hardly doubt that from the earliest period records of the different contests were preserved in the official archives. But in addition to these documentary registers, elaborate monuments of stone were erected by the state in or near to the theatre of Dionysus. Considerable fragments of these monuments have been discovered by recent excavations. They may be divided into three classes. The first class consisted of records of all the contests at some one particular festival. Such records were of the most general description, and contained merely a list of victors' names. Fragments have been discovered of the records of the contests at the City Dionysia during the fifth and fourth centuries<sup>2</sup>. The style is the same throughout. The boys' choruses are mentioned first, then the choruses of men, then comedy, and tragedy last of all. In the dithyrambic contests the names of the victorious tribe and choregus are given; in the dramatic contests the names of the victorious choregus and poet. The only difference between the earlier and later portions of the record is that towards the middle of the fifth century the name of the tragic actor begins to be appended. The following specimen, which refers to the year 458, is of especial interest, since it was in this year that Aeschylus brought out his Orestean tetralogy :—

Archonship of Philocles :  
 Boys' chorus, tribe Oeneis :  
 Choregus, Demodocus :  
 Chorus of men, tribe Hippothontis :  
 Choregus, Euctemon of Eleusis :  
 Comedy :  
 Choregus, Eurycleides :  
 Poet, Euphronius :

<sup>1</sup> Plut. Themist. 114 C. Cp. Corp. 1285 b, &c.

Ins. Att. ii. 1280, 1285 (a metrical inscription), 1289, iv. 1280 b, 1282 b, f-h. <sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 971 a-e, iv. 971

Tragedy:

Choregus, Xenocles of Aphidna:

Poet, Aeschylus.

The second class of public monuments was devoted to the record of one particular kind of contest at a particular festival. It went into much greater detail than the class already mentioned. Fragments of several monuments of this class have been preserved. There are records of tragedy at the Lenaea in the fifth century, and at the City Dionysia in the fourth; also of comedy at the Lenaea in the fourth century, and at one of the festivals, probably the City Dionysia, in the second<sup>1</sup>. In these lists the names of all the competing poets are given, together with the titles of the plays they produced, and the names of the actors who performed them. At the end comes the name of the actor who won the prize for acting. If there was any reproduction of an old tragedy or comedy, the name of the play is given, together with the name of the actor. The following specimen is a record of the tragic contests at the City Dionysia in the year 340 B.C.:—

Archonship of Nicomachus: Satyric Play,

The Lycurgus of Timocles:

Old Tragedy, actor Neoptolemus:

Play, the Orestes of Euripides:

Poets: Astydamos first

With the Parthenopaëus, actor Thessalus,

The Lycaon, actor Neoptolemus:

Timocles second with the Phrixus,

Actor Thessalus,

The Oedipus, actor Neoptolemus:

Evaretus third

. . . . . actor Thessalus,

. . . . . actor Neoptolemus:

Prize for acting, Thessalus.

The records of the comic contests are numerous, but in no case do they extend over a whole year. The general style of them will be best exemplified by giving the first part of one year's list, and the last part of another:—

Archonship of Xenocles: Old Comedy,

Actor Monimus: Play, Menander's Ghost:

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 972, 973, 975.

Poets: Paranomus first with . . . ,  
 Actor, Damon :  
 Criton second with the Aetolian,  
 Actor, Monimus :  
 Biottus third with the Poet,  
 Actor Damon :  
 &c., &c.

The following is the termination of another list :—

Sogenes fourth with the Devoted Slave,  
 Actor Hecataeus :  
 Philemon the Younger fifth with the Girl of Miletus :  
 Actor, Crates :  
 Prize for acting, Onesimus.

The third class of monument was of a different kind altogether. It consisted of lists of tragic and comic actors, and tragic and comic poets, with numerals after each of them, denoting the number of victories they had won in the course of their career. There were separate lists for the City Dionysia and the Lenaea. There were consequently eight lists in all, four for each festival. Numerous fragments have been discovered, but unfortunately the most interesting parts are not always the best preserved<sup>1</sup>. Still they throw light upon several small points in connexion with the drama. One fragment confirms the account of Diodorus, that the number of Sophocles' victories was eighteen. At any rate that is proved to have been the number of his victories at the City Dionysia. Cratinus is represented as having won three victories at the City Dionysia and six at the Lenaea. This tallies exactly with the account of Suidas, who gives the total number of his victories as nine<sup>2</sup>. The following specimen is a list of comic poets, with the number of their victories at the City Dionysia :—

Xenophilus I.	Hermippus IIII.
Telecleides V.	Phrynichus II.
Aristomenes II.	Myrtilus I.
Cratinus III.	Eupolis III.
Pherecrates II.	

None of the public monuments, of which fragments have been recovered, appear to have been erected before the third century

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 977, iv. 977.

<sup>2</sup> Diod. Sic. xiii. 103; Suidas v. Κρατῖνος.



B.C. But there can be no doubt that similar monuments had existed at a much earlier period. These records, together with the choregic inscriptions and the documents in the public archives, must have been the source from which Aristotle derived the information contained in his two books about the contests at the Dionysia. Of these two books the first was called 'Dionysiac Victories,' and though it is never quoted by ancient writers, it probably contained the same sort of information as the first and third classes of public monuments. The other book was called the 'Didascaliae,' and is very frequently referred to and quoted from<sup>1</sup>. It contained lists of the poets who competed at each festival, together with the names of the plays they produced. It was therefore similar to the second class of monuments. The origin of the title of the book is as follows. 'Didascalia,' in its dramatic sense, meant originally the teaching and training of a chorus. It then came to denote the play or group of plays produced by a poet at a single festival<sup>2</sup>. Lastly, it was used to denote a record concerning the production of a play or group of plays. It is in this sense that Aristotle used it as the title of his book. The work would not be a mere compilation from existing records and monuments. It must have required some care and research. For instance, when a poet had his plays brought out vicariously, we cannot doubt that the name of the nominal author was entered in the public records, and not that of the real poet. Aristophanes usually brought out his plays in this manner. Then again a poet's plays were sometimes brought out after his death in the name of his son. In these and similar cases it would be the duty of the compiler of a work like Aristotle's to correct the mistakes of the public records, and to substitute where necessary the name of the real poet of the play. Corrections of this kind were no doubt made by Aristotle and his successors. The Didascaliae of Aristotle is the ultimate source of our information as to the production and the success of the plays of the great Athenian dramatists.

<sup>1</sup> Diog. Laërt. v. i. 26. A complete list of the quotations from Aristotle's *Διδασκαλῖαι* is given in Bekker's Aristotle, vol. v. p. 1572.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 21 (note 1), 84.

Callimachus, the grammarian of Alexandria, wrote a book of a similar kind, based upon Aristotle's work<sup>1</sup>. It was from Callimachus that Aristophanes, the grammarian, derived the information which he incorporated in his Arguments to the Greek plays<sup>2</sup>. The existing Arguments are mainly fragments of the work of Aristophanes<sup>3</sup>. Thus the process of derivation from Aristotle can be traced step by step. The authenticity of the information contained in these Arguments has been strikingly proved by a recent discovery. The list of victors at the City Dionysia for the year 458, which was dug up at Athens a few years ago, tallies in every particular with the facts recorded in the Argument to the Agamemnon of Aeschylus<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. *Καλλιμάχος*; Schol. Aristoph. Nub. 552.

<sup>2</sup> Etym. Mag. v. *πίναξ*.

<sup>3</sup> Trendelenberg, Gramm. Graec. de

Arte Tragica Iudiciorum Reliquiae, p. 3 foll.

<sup>4</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iv. 971 f. See above, p. 19, note 1.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PRODUCTION OF A PLAY

#### § 1. *The Poets.*

It has already been pointed out that the dramatic performances at Athens were managed entirely by the state. No such thing was known as for an individual citizen to give an exhibition of plays as a private speculation. The drama was one of the principal ornaments of the great festivals of Dionysus, and the regulation of the drama was as much the duty of the government as the management of a public sacrifice or other religious ceremonial. Of the two festivals to which dramatic performances were confined, the Lenaea was superintended by the archon basileus, while the archon eponymus was responsible for the City Dionysia. These two archons had therefore to undertake the general arrangement of the dramatic exhibitions at their respective festivals<sup>1</sup>. They had not much to do with the details of preparation. Their functions mainly consisted in selecting the proper persons, setting them to work,

<sup>1</sup> Athen. Pol. cc. 56 and 57. Some new details about the regulation of the festivals are supplied by these two chapters. We now learn that the archons managed the various contests by themselves, but were assisted by curators in the organisation of the processions. The curators at the City Dionysia (*ἐπιμεληταὶ τῆς πομπῆς*) were ten in number. Until 352 they were elected by the people from the general mass of the citizens, and paid the expenses of the procession themselves.

After 352 they were chosen by lot, one from each of the tribes, and received a hundred minae from the state to cover the expenses. In the third century the system of election was reintroduced. The curators at the Lenaea were also curators of the Eleusinian mysteries (*ἐπιμεληταὶ τῶν μυστηρίων*). They were four in number, and were elected by the state, two from the people generally, one each from the *Κήρυκες* and *Εὐμολπίδαι*. See Sandys' notes ad loc.

and seeing that they performed their duties satisfactorily. At Athens this was a matter of some complexity. Several persons had to co-operate in the production of a play. The expenses of the chorus were defrayed by the choregus, who fulfilled this duty as one of the public burdens to which the richer citizens were liable. The play was written, and the chorus trained, by the poet. The principal actor, at any rate in later times, was chosen by the state, and assigned to the poet by lot. It was the duty of the archon to bring together these three persons, the choregus, the poet, and the actor, and to see that they did not neglect the work of preparation. The object of the present chapter is to explain in detail the system on which these preliminary arrangements were conducted, as well as the other circumstances which attended the production of a play at Athens.

When a poet wished to bring out a play, he sent in his application to the archon. If he was a tragic author of established reputation, he would probably prefer to exhibit at the City Dionysia, and would apply to the archon eponymus. With the comic dramatists both festivals were equally popular. The plays offered for exhibition were carefully examined by the archon, who proceeded to select, from among the various applicants, the number of poets required by the particular festival<sup>1</sup>. If it was tragedy at the City Dionysia that he was superintending, three poets would be chosen. If it was comedy, the number of poets would be three, or in later times five. When a poet applied for permission to exhibit, he was said to 'ask for a chorus,' because the first step taken by the archon was to assign him a choregus, who defrayed the expenses of his chorus. Similarly, when the archon acceded to a poet's application, he was said to 'grant him a chorus<sup>2</sup>.' The number of applicants must often have been very large, especially for

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. χορὸν δίδωμι· ἐν ἴσῳ τῷ εὐδοκιμεῖν καὶ νικᾶν· παρὰ γὰρ τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις χοροῦ ἐτύγχανον καμφοδίας καὶ τραγωδίας ποιηταὶ οὐ πάντες ἀλλὰ οἱ εὐδοκιμοῦντες καὶ δοκιμασθέντες ἄξιοι. To be allowed to compete was an

honour, but was not regarded as a victory, as Suidas asserts. The title of victor was reserved for the poet who obtained the first place in the competition. See above, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> Athen. p. 638 F; Suidas l. c.

the City Dionysia; and to decide between their rival claims would be a task of great delicacy. It appears that the whole responsibility was thrown upon the archon. It was he who selected the poets, and assigned the choruses<sup>1</sup>. It was inevitable that functions of this kind should sometimes have been performed with partiality and unfairness. An author who had interest with the archon for the year would have a better chance of obtaining a chorus than a mere stranger. Mention is made of an archon who refused a chorus to the great comic poet Cratinus. Another archon is said to have given a chorus to one Cleomachus in preference to Sophocles<sup>2</sup>. The only check upon such favouritism was public opinion. In a place like Athens, where the magistrates were entirely at the mercy of the people, and were subjected to severe scrutiny at the end of their year of office, it would be impossible for an archon to disregard public opinion in a very flagrant manner. Probably therefore in most cases the best poets were chosen.

It is often stated erroneously that there was a law regulating the age at which poets were permitted to compete. One of the scholiasts on the *Clouds* says that no poet was allowed to exhibit until he had reached the age of thirty. Another scholiast puts the age at forty or thirty. These are the only authorities for the existence of any such law<sup>3</sup>. Their statements upon the point appear to be mere conjectures, invented to explain the fact that Aristophanes did not at first produce his plays in his own person. Possibly they were misled by a confused recollection of the law that no man could be choregus to a chorus of boys until he had reached the age of forty. In regard to poets, there cannot have been any law of the kind they mention. Take the case of Aristophanes. His first play was the *Banqueters*, which he brought out in another man's name in 427, while he was still 'almost a boy.' Three years later he brought out the *Knights* in his own name. If he was almost a boy in 427, he cannot have been anything like thirty

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. *Poet.* c. 5; Cratinus, *Βοηκόλοι*, frag. I (Meineke, *Frag. Com. Gr.* ii. p. 27); Athen. *Pol.* cc. 56, 57.

<sup>2</sup> Cratinus, l. c.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Aristoph. *Nub.* 510, 530.

when he exhibited the Knights<sup>1</sup>. The other great poets began to exhibit at a very early age. Aeschylus was only twenty-five at the time of his first dramatic contest. Sophocles won his first tragic victory at the age of twenty-eight. Euripides began to contend when he was twenty-six<sup>2</sup>. All that appears to have been required was that the poet should have reached the age of twenty, passed his *docimasia*, and been enrolled in the list of citizens. Before this it is not likely that he would be allowed to take part in the contests. Eupolis is said to have been only seventeen when he began to produce comedies. But if this was really the case, probably his earlier plays were brought out by friends, and not in his own name<sup>3</sup>.

It seems to have been not an uncommon practice for a poet to have his plays produced by a friend, instead of coming forward in his own person. Various reasons might induce him to do so. In the first place, a young poet might feel diffident of his powers, and might wish to conceal his identity until he had tested them by experience. This seems to have been the reason why the first three plays of Aristophanes, the *Banqueters*, the *Babylonians*, and the *Acharnians*, were produced by Callistratus<sup>4</sup>. Aristophanes did not come forward in his own name till the year 424, when he brought out his *Knights*. In the parabasis of this play he explains at some length the reasons which induced him to keep in the background at first. His reasons were partly the difficulty of writing comedies, partly the fickleness of the Athenians, partly a feeling that one ought to proceed warily in the business, and advance by slow degrees, just as the steersman of a ship begins by serving as a common oarsman. He says nothing about any law which would have prevented him producing his early plays in his own name, but ascribes his conduct entirely to youthful modesty. Referring to the same subject in the *Clouds* he expressed

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Aristoph. *Ran.* 504; Arg. to Aristoph. *Equites*.

<sup>2</sup> Suidas v. *Αίσχυλος*; Marmor Par. ep. 56; Vita I Eurip.

<sup>3</sup> Suidas v. *Εὐπολῖς*.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. Aristoph. *Nub.* 531; Anon. de Comoed. (Dindorf, *Prolegom.* de Comoed. p. 24); Suidas v. *Σαπφὶς ὁ δῆμος*; Arg. Aristoph. *Acharn.*

similar ideas in a metaphorical way, by saying that at the time when the Banqueters came out his Muse was still a virgin, and too young to have a child of her own<sup>1</sup>. One reason then for this vicarious production of plays was merely the diffidence of youth, and a desire to make the first experiments anonymously. A second and quite a different motive was that which actuated old poets, when they allowed their sons to bring out their plays, and have the credit of the authorship, in order to give them a successful start in their dramatic career. Aristophanes for this reason entrusted to his son Araros the production of his two latest comedies. Iophon also was suspected of exhibiting in his own name the tragedies of his father Sophocles<sup>2</sup>. A third case was that in which wealthy citizens, who had a wish for poetical distinction, bought plays from needy authors, and exhibited them as their own. Plato, the poet of the Old Comedy, is said to have been compelled by poverty to sell his comedies in this manner<sup>3</sup>. A fourth reason was probably the desire to avoid the labour and the trouble of bringing out a play. The earlier dramatic poets were stage-managers as well as authors, and the superintendence of the production of a play was part of the business of their profession. But in later times, when play-writing had a tendency to become more entirely a literary pursuit, authors appear to have entrusted their plays to friends who had more experience in theatrical affairs. It is true that a professional trainer might be procured, who thoroughly understood the business of producing a play. But still a certain amount of trouble and responsibility must have devolved upon the person in whose name the play was brought out, and to whom the archon granted the chorus. It was most likely some reason of this kind which induced the tragic poet Aphareus never to bring out his plays in his own name<sup>4</sup>. He was quite as much a rhetorician as a dramatist, and probably knew nothing at all about the details of stage-management. Though he exhibited

<sup>1</sup> Aristoph. Equit. 512-544, Nub. 528-531.

<sup>2</sup> Arg. to Aristoph. Plutus; Schol.

Aristoph. Ran. 73.

<sup>3</sup> Suidas v. Ἀρκάδας μισοῦμενοι.

<sup>4</sup> Plut. X orat. 839 D.

tragedies on eight occasions, they were always entrusted for production to a friend. A similar reason may have induced Aristophanes, during the middle of his career, to entrust so many of his plays to Philonides and Callistratus. For instance, the *Birds* and the *Lysistrata* were exhibited by Callistratus, the *Wasps*, the *Proagon*, the *Frogs*, and the *Amphiarus* by Philonides<sup>1</sup>. In addition to the examples already mentioned there are other instances of vicarious production, where it is very difficult to discover what the motives really were. Philip, one of the sons of Aristophanes, is said to have 'frequently competed with plays of Eubulus.' The Autolycus of Eupolis was brought out by an obscure poet called Demostratus<sup>2</sup>. In these cases there may have been special circumstances which are unknown to us. But as far as our information goes, the only plausible reasons for having plays brought out vicariously appear to be the four already mentioned, the timidity of youth, the stress of poverty, kindness towards a relative, or the desire to escape responsibility. Other reasons have been suggested. For instance, it has been conjectured that on certain occasions a poet's friend might have a better chance than the poet himself of obtaining a chorus from the archon. But there does not seem to be much plausibility in the suggestion. No one would be more likely to obtain a chorus from the archon than an author of distinguished reputation. The reasons already given are the only ones which stand the test of examination.

As to the relationship between the poet and the friend who produced his plays for him a few points require to be noticed. It was the nominal poet who made the application to the archon, received the chorus, and undertook the whole responsibility<sup>3</sup>. At the same time it appears that the name of the real poet was often perfectly well known. Of course if secrecy was an object, this would not be so. When a father gave his plays to his

<sup>1</sup> Args. to Aristoph. *Av.*, *Lysist.*, *Vesp.*, *Ran.*

<sup>2</sup> Vit. Aristoph. (Dindf. *Prolegom. de Comoed.* p. 39); Athen. p. 216 D.

<sup>3</sup> Aristoph. *Equit.* 512, 513 ἀ δὲ θαυμάζειν ἡμῶν φησιν πολλοὺς αὐτῷ προσιώντας, | καὶ βασανίζειν, ὡς οὐχὶ πάσαι χορὸν αἰτοῖν καθ' ἑαυτὸν κ.τ.λ.



son, he kept his own name concealed. The real authorship was only revealed in later times. Iophon was merely suspected of having competed with the plays of his father Sophocles, and was not known for certain to have done so. But in other instances the real poet was known from the very first. Aristophanes in the *Knights* says that many people had been asking him why he gave his plays to Callistratus, and did not ask for a chorus in his own name. Again, in the *Wasps*, which was brought out by Philonides, the chorus refer to the author of the play in terms which are only applicable to Aristophanes<sup>1</sup>. It follows that from the very first the real authorship of the plays of Aristophanes was more or less an open secret. Hence it is most likely that when the author of the *Babylonians* was prosecuted by Cleon, it was the real author Aristophanes, and not the nominal author Callistratus, who was attacked. At the same time the nominal author was the one officially recognised by the state. There can be no doubt that it was his name which was entered as victor in the public archives, and that he received the prize and the other rewards of victory, such as the public proclamation and the crown. The existing *didascaliae* in cases of vicarious production give the name of the real author, with a note to the effect that the play was actually brought out by such and such a person. This can hardly have been the form adopted originally in the public records, but must be due to the corrections of Aristotle and his successors.

## § 2. *Appointment of the Choregi.*

To return to the preliminary arrangements in connexion with the dramatic exhibitions. For every play or group of plays a choregus was required to provide and pay for the chorus. Choregi were also required for the dithyrambic contests. These latter being of a tribal character, the choregi in this case were appointed by the separate tribes, the appointment taking place one month after the last festival<sup>2</sup>. But the

<sup>1</sup> Aristoph. *Equites* l. c., *Vespae* 1016-1022.

<sup>2</sup> Arg. ii. to Dem. Meid.

dramatic contests had nothing to do with the tribes. Consequently the dramatic choregi were chosen without distinction from the general mass of qualified citizens. They were nominated by the archon in charge of each festival immediately after his accession to office in July<sup>1</sup>. This at any rate was the original system. But about the middle of the fourth century a change was made in regard to the comic choregi at the City Dionysia, and their appointment was transferred from the archon to the tribes<sup>2</sup>. Probably, though there is no direct statement to that effect, the same regulation was also applied to the Lenaea. Thus the ten tribes would all share the duty in turn, five of them selecting the choregi for one festival, five for the other. By the new arrangement the nomination of the comic choregi was assimilated to that of the dithyrambic, and no doubt took place for the future at the same period of the year. But the change appears to have been a mere piece of administrative detail, and to have made no alteration in the character of the performance. The comic contest remained as before a contest between individuals, and was not converted into a tribal one. In the records of the period which refer to comedy the names inserted are still only those of the choregus and the poet<sup>3</sup>. There is no mention of a tribe, as in the dithyrambic records.

The dramatic choregia was a burden which, like the other public burdens, had to be undertaken in turn by the members of the wealthier classes. The order was fixed by law. But a man of more than usual ambition or generosity might volunteer for the office of choregus out of his proper turn. The defendant in one of the speeches of Lysias points out that he had been choregus to no less than eight choruses in a space of nine years, in addition to such expenses as the war-tax and the trierarchy. He adds that if he had only undertaken such burdens as he was compelled to perform by law, he would not have spent a quarter of the money<sup>4</sup>. Any man might be selected as choregus as soon as he had reached

<sup>1</sup> Athen. Pol. c. 56.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 971 d, iv. 971 h.

<sup>4</sup> Lysias orat. xxi. §§ 1-5.

the age of twenty, and been enrolled as a full citizen. The defendant in the speech just referred to passed his *dôcimasia* in the archonship of Theopompus, and in that very same year he acted as choregus to a tragic chorus, and to a chorus of men<sup>1</sup>. There was a law that no one should be choregus to a boys' chorus till he had reached the age of forty. But this law had nothing to do with the choruses of men, or the choruses in tragedy or comedy<sup>2</sup>.

Occasionally some difficulty was felt in finding a sufficient number of rich men to fill the office. In the time of Demosthenes the tribe Pandionis was for three years unable to supply a choregus for the dithyrambic contests<sup>3</sup>. At a much earlier period, towards the end of the Peloponnesian War, when there had been long and heavy drains upon the resources of the state, it was found necessary to lighten the burden of the choregia. Accordingly in 406 a law was passed enacting that each dramatic chorus at the City Dionysia should be provided by two choregi instead of one. Thus the cost to individuals was diminished by half. The law was only intended as a temporary expedient, and was not applied to the Lenaea<sup>4</sup>. Even at the City Dionysia it was repealed, as far as tragedy is concerned, some time before 387, and individual choregi were again appointed<sup>5</sup>. In the case of comedy it seems to have lasted down to the middle of the century, but disappeared before 329<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Lysias l. c.

<sup>2</sup> Aeschin. Timarch. §§ 11, 12; Harpocrat. v. *ἐνὶ νόμος*.

<sup>3</sup> Dem. Meid. § 13.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 406, who suggests that the system was also extended to the Lenaea. But this is disproved by Lysias, xxi. § 4, where the defendant says he was choregus (not synchoregus) to a comic chorus in 402 B. C. The synchoregia cannot therefore have been applied to both festivals.

<sup>5</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 971 c (tragic choregus at the City Dionysia for 387). Tragic synchoregi occur twice in inscriptions at the beginning of the fourth

century (Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 1280, iv. 1280 b). Tragic choregi are also mentioned in Isaews, v. § 36 (389 B. C.), and Lysias, xix. § 29 (394-389 B. C.). But as the festival is not mentioned in either case, and may have been the Lenaea, no inference can be drawn as to the discontinuance of the synchoregia.

<sup>6</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iv. 971 h (comic choregus at the City Dionysia in 329). Comic synchoregi are found in Corp. Ins. Att. iv. 1280 b (beginning of the fourth century) and in ii. 1280 b (middle of the same century). The latter inscription, however, was found at a distance from Athens, and may possibly

One of the grammarians asserts that soon after the first institution of synchoregi the choregia as a whole was abolished by Cinesias. His statement is clearly erroneous<sup>1</sup>. Numerous instances of choregi are to be found for nearly a hundred years after the date to which he refers<sup>2</sup>. But towards the end of the fourth century, and probably in 318, the choregia was replaced by a new system<sup>3</sup>. The providing and training of the choruses was undertaken by the state, and an officer called the Agonothetes was elected annually to carry out the arrangements. This official was entrusted with the management of all the musical contests, together with the accompanying sacrifices. He was expected to perform every duty which had previously fallen to the choregi, and even to erect the tripods and other memorials of victory<sup>4</sup>. Though assisted by subventions from the state, he bore the chief part of the expense himself, and was always chosen on account of his wealth<sup>5</sup>. His duties in connexion with the tragic and comic choruses would not be very arduous, the choral part of the drama having now sunk into obscurity. But there were certain other expenses connected with the mounting of the plays, which he, like the choregi before him, would have to meet. The change of system now adopted, and the substitution of a single superintendent for the group of rival choregi, can hardly be regarded as an improvement. In former times the emulation between

refer to the Rural Dionysia: so that the inference based on it is not certain. That joint choregi were sometimes appointed at the rural festivals is proved by iv. 1282 b (three tragic choregi in partnership at Icaria).

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 406, who adds, *ἐξ οὗ καὶ Στράτις ἐν τῷ εἰς αὐτὸν δράματι ἔφη σκηρῇ μὲν τοῦ χοροκτόνου Κυνηίου*. Possibly, as Capps (American Journal of Archaeology, 1895, p. 316) suggests, the error arose from a misunderstanding of this epithet *χοροκτόνος*, which was meant to apply to Cinesias as a bad lyric poet, and not as a legislator against choruses.

<sup>2</sup> Athen. Pol. c. 56, which shows that

choregi were a regular institution in the latter half of the fourth century. •

<sup>3</sup> There were still choregi in 319 (Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 1246, 1247). But Nicanor was appointed Agonothetes immediately after the death of Antipator (Plut. Phoc. 31), who died in 319.

<sup>4</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 302, 307, 314, 331, 379.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. ii. 314 καὶ εἰς ταῦτα πάντα ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων ἀναλώσας πολλὰ χρήματα. This phrase, however, does not imply that he paid the *whole* of the expenses; and the formula *ὁ δῆμος ἐχορήγει*, constantly found in agonothetic inscriptions, seems to show that the people bore a part.

the individual citizens who undertook the work had contributed largely to the interest and vitality of the contests. All these advantages were now abandoned. But some alteration in the arrangements was no doubt necessitated by the circumstances of the time, and the dearth of rich citizens. The name of the Agonothetes occurs frequently in inscriptions during the third century<sup>1</sup>. Then for about two hundred years there is a blank in our information. In the first century A.D. the office again appears, but this time in association with single choregi<sup>2</sup>. Whence it would seem that at this date there had been a sort of antiquarian revival, and that the ancient choregi had been once more introduced, and the festivals remodelled. But the Agonothetes was retained to act as general manager, like the praetor in the Roman games.

When the archon had selected the poets whose plays were to be performed at the approaching festival, and the list had been made up of the choregi who were to supply the choruses, the next thing to be done was to arrange the choregi and poets together in pairs. Each choregus had one poet assigned to him, for whose chorus he was responsible. There is no definite information as to the manner in which this arrangement was carried out in the case of tragic and comic choruses. But in the case of the dithyrambic choruses there are full accounts of the manner in which similar arrangements were made; and it will not be difficult, from the analogy of these proceedings, to form a fairly clear conception of the proceedings in regard to tragedy and comedy. Every dithyrambic chorus required a flute-player. These flute-players were first selected by the state, and then distributed among the different choregi. Some time before the festival a meeting of the ecclesia was held, at which the distribution took place under the superintendence of the archon. The proceedings were quite public, and any Athenian citizen who wished could be present. The system was as follows. There were of course ten choregi and ten

<sup>1</sup> See p. 76, note 4.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iii. 78 (Agonothetes and choregus together); *ibid.* 79, 83,

84 (choregi alone); *ibid.* i, 10, 121,

457, 613, 721, 810, 1091 (Agonothetes alone).

flute-players. The choregi first drew lots for order of choice, and then each chose his own flute-player. The choregus who had obtained the privilege of choosing first selected the flute-player whom he considered to be the best of the ten. So they went on till all the flute-players were chosen. The scene was a lively one. The success of the choregus, and in consequence the success of his tribe, depended to a certain extent upon his luck in getting a good or bad flute-player. Hence the whole process was followed with the greatest interest by the crowds of spectators present. As each lot was drawn, the result was greeted with expressions of triumph or disappointment by the partisans of the different choregi<sup>1</sup>. The above information is derived from the account given by Demosthenes, in the speech against Meidias, of the preliminary arrangements for the dithyrambic contests. Nothing is there said about the choice or assignation of the poets. Probably in this contest only old dithyramps were reproduced, and there were no poets to be assigned. That such was often the case is proved by inscriptions<sup>2</sup>. But when the contest was with original dithyramps, and poets were required, they seem to have been allotted to the choregi in much the same manner as the flute-players. The defendant in one of the speeches of Antiphon says that, when he was choregus to a chorus of boys at the Thargelia, the poet Pantacles was assigned to him by lot<sup>3</sup>. The system then in the case of the dithyrambic choruses was that at a meeting of the ecclesia, held

<sup>1</sup> Demosth. Meid. §§ 13, 14; 2nd Arg. to Meidias, p. 510.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 1246 Νικίας Νικοδήμου Ξυπεταίων ἀνέθηκε νικήσας χορηγῶν Κεκροπίδι παῖδων Παντακλέων Σικυνώνιος ἡΐλει· ἄσμα Ἑλληνῶν Τιμοθέου· Νέαιχμος ἤρχεν. In this case the dithyramb performed was the Elpenor of the celebrated poet Timotheus. When old dithyramps were performed, and no poet was necessary, a professional trainer was hired to look after the chorus. Such was the διδάσκαλος mentioned by Demosthenes (Meid. § 17).

<sup>3</sup> Antiphon, orat. vi. § 11 ἐπειδὴ

χορηγὸς κατεστάθην εἰς Θαργήλια καὶ ἔλαχον Παντακλέα διδάσκαλον κ.τ.λ. Pantacles was a poet, and not a mere trainer of choruses, like the διδάσκαλος hired by Demosthenes. This is proved by a passage in Etym. Mag. v. διδάσκαλος· ἰδίως διδασκίλους λέγουσιν οἱ Ἀττικοὶ τοὺς ποιητὰς τῶν διθυράμβων ἢ τῶν κωμῶδων ἢ τῶν τραγῳδιῶν. Ἀντίφων ἐν τῷ περὶ τοῦ χορευτοῦ· ἔλαχόν, φησι, Παντακλέα διδάσκαλον· ὅτι γὰρ ὁ Παντακλῆς ποιητής, δεδήλωκεν Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν ταῖς Διδασκαλίαις. When there was a poet, a professional trainer was not usually required. The poet undertook the training of the chorus.

under the superintendence of the archon, the choregi drew lots for the flute-players, and (where necessary) for the poets. Probably much the same system was adopted in tragedy and comedy. Some time before the festival the choregi would meet, and after the order of choice had been determined by lot, each choregus would choose his poet. Quite as much depended upon this allotment, in the case of tragedy and comedy, as in the case of the dithyrambic contests. A choregus who obtained an inferior poet would be heavily handicapped in the competition; and a poet who was joined to a mean and unambitious choregus would be equally unfortunate. If a matter of such importance had been left to be decided by individual will, it would have given endless opportunities for unfairness and favouritism. The best precaution against such an evil was to arrange the matter by lot.

### § 3. *Selection of the Actors.*

Poets and choregi having been associated together in pairs, there still remained the selection and appointment of the actors. The manner in which they were appointed differed very considerably at different periods. To take the case of tragic actors first. Before the time of Aeschylus, when tragedy was more a lyrical than a dramatic performance, consisting of long choral odes interspersed with recitatives, actors did not exist as a separate class. Only one actor was required in each play, and his part was taken by the poet<sup>1</sup>. But when Aeschylus increased the number of actors to two, and converted tragedy from a lyrical into a dramatic form of art, the poets ceased to perform in their own plays, and the actor's profession came into existence. For the next fifty years or so it does not appear that the state took any part in the selection of the actors. It left the matter in the hands of the poets. Particular actors are found to have been permanently connected with particular poets. Aeschylus is said to have first employed Cleander as his actor, and to have afterwards associated a second actor with him

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. Rhet. iii. 1.

in the person of Mynniscus<sup>1</sup>. Tlepolemus acted continuously for Sophocles<sup>2</sup>. It is stated, on the authority of Ister, that Sophocles was accustomed to write his plays with a view to the capacities of his actors<sup>3</sup>. This story, whether true or not, shows that he chose his actors himself, at any rate during the earlier part of his career. But in the course of time, as the actors grew in importance, fresh regulations were made concerning them. Their selection was no longer left to the choice of individual poets, but was undertaken by the state. Henceforth we cease to hear of particular poets and actors being permanently associated together. The statement of Thomas Magister, that Cephisophon was the actor of Euripides, appears to be a mere conjecture, as Cephisophon is nowhere else described in that way<sup>4</sup>. The change in the method of selection was probably introduced about the middle of the fifth century, when the contests in acting were established, and the position of the actors received its first official recognition. The proceedings under the new arrangement were as follows. Three protagonists were first of all selected by the archon. There is no information as to the way in which they were selected. They may have been chosen by means of a small competition, similar to that between comic actors at the Chytri. The subordinate actors were apparently not chosen by the state, but each protagonist was allowed to provide his own deuteragonist and tritagonist<sup>5</sup>. When the three leading actors had been chosen they were assigned to the three competing tragic poets by lot. Probably the system was the same as in the assignation of the flute-players to the dithyrambic choruses. The poets would first draw lots for order of choice, and then each poet would choose his actor. The actor performed all the tragedies of the poet to whom he was allotted. Thus in 418 the three tragedies of Callistratus were acted by Callipides; the three tragedies of his rival were acted by Lysicrates<sup>6</sup>. The actor who won the prize for acting was permitted to com-

<sup>1</sup> Vit. Aesch.<sup>2</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Nub. 1267.<sup>3</sup> Vita Soph.<sup>4</sup> Vita Eur.<sup>5</sup> Dem. Fals. Leg. §§ 10, 246; de

Cor. § 262.

<sup>6</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 972.



pete as a matter of course at the next festival without having to submit to the process of selection by the archon. Such was the system adopted during the latter half of the fifth century<sup>1</sup>. How long it lasted cannot be determined; but when we come to the middle of the fourth century, a further alteration is found to have been introduced. By this time the importance of the actors had increased to a still greater extent. In fact, Aristotle says that in his day the success of a play depended much more upon the actor than the poet<sup>2</sup>. It was probably felt that under the old arrangement the poet who obtained by lot the greatest actor had an unfair advantage over his rivals. A new system was therefore introduced, by which the talents of the actors were divided with perfect equality among the poets. Each tragedy was performed by a separate actor. All the actors appeared in turn in the service of each of the poets. Thus in 341 Astydamas exhibited three tragedies. His Achilles was acted by Thessalus, his Athamas by Neoptolemus, his Antigone by Athenodorus. The three tragedies of each of his competitors were performed by the same three actors<sup>3</sup>. By this arrangement no poet had any advantage over his rivals, but as far as the excellence of the actors was concerned all were on exactly the same level. The system just described appears to have been retained without alteration during the remaining period of Attic tragedy.

The mode of distributing the actors in comedy was much the same as that in tragedy. During the earlier part of the fifth

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. *νεμήσεις υποκριτῶν*. οἱ ποιηταὶ ἐλάμβανον τρεῖς υποκριτὰς κλήρῳ νεμηθέντας, υποκρινομένους τὰ δράματα ἃν ὁ νικήσας εἰς τοῦτιν ἀκριτος παραλαμβάνεται. The interpretation of this passage had long been a mystery; but the discovery of the existence of an actors' contest, side by side with that between the poets, has made the matter comparatively clear. Obviously ὁ νικήσας denotes, not the victorious poet, nor yet the actor who acted for him, but the actor who won the prize for acting. Τοῦτιν apparently means 'the next festival.' The victorious actor was

allowed to act at the next festival as a matter of course. The 'three actors' are the three protagonists required at each tragic contest, and not the three actors required by each poet. This is proved by the words *ἃν ὁ νικήσας*, which imply that the three actors mentioned all took part in the actors' contest. But the actors' contest was limited to the protagonists; the subordinate actors had nothing to do with it. See above, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> Aristot. Rhet. iii. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 973.

century the poets were left to choose their own actors. Thus the comic poet Crates is said to have begun his career as actor to Cratinus. But in later times no instances are to be found of comic actors being permanently connected with particular poets. The story that Philonides and Callistratus were actors of Aristophanes is a mere fiction of one of the old commentators, based upon a misunderstanding<sup>1</sup>. It is evident, therefore, that the state began to undertake the selection and appointment of the comic actors about the same time that a corresponding change was made in regard to tragedy. No doubt the mode of distribution was identical. The actors were first appointed by the state, and the poets then drew lots for them. As the comic poets competed with single plays, only one method of distribution was possible, and there was no need of the further alteration which was afterwards made in tragedy. The number of poets in the comic contests was originally three, and in later times five. A corresponding number of actors would be required. Sometimes however a smaller number was selected, and one actor appeared in two comedies. In 353 Aristomachus was the actor assigned both to Simylus and Diodorus. In later times Damon is found occasionally acting in two comedies at the same competition<sup>2</sup>. It is not likely that such a course was adopted except on occasions when it was impossible to obtain five comic actors of fairly equal merit.

#### § 4. *The Training of the Chorus.*

The archon had now for the present finished his part of the business. He had seen that the proper number of poets, actors, and choregi had been chosen. He had seen that each choregus was provided with his own poet and actor. It was now the

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Equit. 534; Vita Aristoph. (Dindf. Prolegom. de Comoed. p. 36). The commentator, misunderstanding the expression that certain plays of Aristophanes were brought out by Philonides and Callis-

tratus (ἐδιδάχθη διὰ Φιλωνίδου κ.τ.λ.), concluded that these persons were actors.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 972, 975 c and d.

duty of choregus and poet to attend to the subsequent preparations. The choregus was responsible for the selection and payment of the chorus. He had also to provide a room for them to rehearse in<sup>1</sup>. Very little is known concerning the relations between the choregus and his chorus. Such few details as have been recorded refer rather to the dithyramb than to the drama. The dithyrambic choruses were selected exclusively from the tribes which they represented in the competition. Each tribe had a specially appointed agent, who was employed by the choregus to collect his chorus for him<sup>2</sup>. But the drama having nothing to do with the tribes, there was no limitation upon the selection of the dramatic choruses. Aristotle happens in one place to remark that a tragic and a comic chorus often consisted of much the same individual members<sup>3</sup>. It is quite clear, therefore, that the dramatic choruses were chosen from the general body of citizens, and that a man might serve in two of them at the same time. There was probably a class of professional singers who made their livelihood by serving in these choruses. A rich choregus would have a great advantage over his rivals by offering higher pay, and so securing better singers. The stories about the boarding and lodging of the choreutae also refer mainly to the dithyrambic choruses. The choregus in Antiphon's speech lodged his chorus in his own house, and gave special directions that every delicacy which was ordered by the trainer should be provided for them<sup>4</sup>. But this was a chorus of boys. The professionals who served in the dramatic choruses are not likely to have been lodged in the house of the choregus, especially as they were often in the service of two choregi at the same time. However, it seems that the diet of the choruses was well attended to, so that the members should appear in the best possible condition on the day of the contests. Plutarch mentions eels, lettuce, garlic, and cheese as delicacies provided

<sup>1</sup> Xen. Hiero ix. 4, Resp. Athen. i. 13. The training room was called *διδασκαλεῖον* (Antiphon orat. vi. § 11), or *χορηγεῖον* (Bekk. Anecd. p. 72, 17; Pollux iv. 106, ix. 42).

<sup>2</sup> Antiphon orat. vi. §§ 11-13; Pollux iv. 106. The agent was called *χορηγέτης*.

<sup>3</sup> Aristot. Pol. iii. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Antiphon l. c.

for this purpose. The appetite of the Attic choreutae passed into a proverb<sup>1</sup>.

During the earlier period of the Athenian drama the principal part in the training and instruction of the chorus was undertaken by the poet himself. In fact, the regular name at Athens for a dramatic or dithyrambic poet was *didaskalos*, or 'the teacher,' owing to the part he took in teaching his play or poem to the chorus. In the same way, when a poet brought out a tragedy or a comedy, the technical expression was that he 'taught' such and such a play. The play, or group of plays, exhibited by a single poet was called a 'teaching'<sup>2</sup>. In addition to the evidence supplied by these expressions, there is also no lack of direct testimony as to the important part taken by the older poets in the production of their plays. In fact, they were quite as much stage-managers as poets. The older dramatic writers, such as Thespis, Pratinas, Cratinus, and Phrynichus, were called 'dancers,' not only because of the prominent part which the chorus and the dancing filled in their plays, but also because they gave instruction in choric dancing<sup>3</sup>. Aeschylus is said to have superintended personally the whole of the training of his choruses, and to have invented many new dances and movements for them. His innovations in regard to the scenery and the dresses of the actors entirely transformed the outward appearance of the drama<sup>4</sup>. This intimate connexion between the poet and the stage, between the literary and the theatrical part of dramatic production, continued to exist during the great period of Athenian drama. Sophocles appeared personally in some of his plays. In the *Thamyris* he played the harp. In the *Nausicaa* he won great applause by the skill with which he played ball in the scene where *Nausicaa* is sporting with her maidens<sup>5</sup>. Euripides also

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch *Glor. Athen.* 349 A; Suidas v. *φαρυγγίνδην* ὡς ἀριστίνδην σκώπτοντες γὰρ τὴν γαστριμαργίαν τῶν χορευτῶν Ἀττικοὶ οὕτω λέγουσι.

<sup>2</sup> Suidas v. *διδάσκαλος*; Aristoph. *Ran.* 1026 *εἴτα διδάξας Πέρσας κ.τ.λ.*; Anthol. Pal. vii. 37 (of a mask of Antigone or Electra) *εἰς ποιῆς ἤδε διδα-*

*σκαλῆς*; Plut. *Pericles* 154 E *ἀλλ' ἴωνα μὲν ὥσπερ τραγικὴν διδασκαλίαν ἀξιοῦντα τὴν ἀρετὴν ἔχειν τι πάντως καὶ σατυρικὸν μέρος ἔωμεν.*

<sup>3</sup> Athen. p. 22 A.

<sup>4</sup> Athen. p. 21 C; Vit. Aeschyli; Philostrat. *Vit. Apoll.* p. 244.

<sup>5</sup> Eustath. *Odys.* p. 1553.

seems to have superintended the training of his choruses in person, as there is a story in Plutarch which represents him as singing over one of his odes to the choreutae<sup>1</sup>.

Originally then the principal part of the training was done by the poet himself. He was assisted in his task by a subordinate, who looked after the routine part of the work, and was called a hypodidaskalos, or 'assistant teacher.' This was the proper term to denote the professional trainer, as opposed to the didaskalos, or poet<sup>2</sup>. But towards the end of the fifth and the beginning of the fourth century the practice in these matters underwent a change. Poetry and stage-management began to be sharply discriminated from one another. A class of literary dramatic writers arose, such as Theodectes and Aphareus, who were quite as much rhetoricians as poets. They knew nothing about the details of training a chorus, or preparing a play for representation. Under these circumstances the greater part of the management was undertaken by the professional instructor. The term didaskalos, which had originally been confined to the poet, was now applied to these hired trainers<sup>3</sup>. A class of men came into existence who made choral instruction their regular business. One of these, named Sannio, is mentioned by Demosthenes, and was celebrated for his skill in training tragic choruses<sup>4</sup>. These professional teachers were hired and paid by the choregus. A rich choregus had a great advantage in being able to secure the best assistance. Socrates mentions the case of a certain choregus called Antisthenes, who knew little or nothing about music and choruses himself, but was always successful in his competitions, because he took care to provide himself with the most skilful trainers procurable<sup>5</sup>. It is obvious that in these later times, when the poets ceased to attend to the details of stage-management, the importance of the professional trainers must have very much increased. The hiring of a good trainer would be one of the first conditions of success.

<sup>1</sup> Plut. De Audiendo, 46 B.

<sup>2</sup> Photius v. ὑποδιδάσκαλος; Plat. Ion p. 536 A.

<sup>3</sup> Thus the trainer hired by Demo-

sthenes for his chorus is called διδάσκαλος, Dem. Meid. § 17.

<sup>4</sup> Dem. Meid. §§ 58, 59.

<sup>5</sup> Xen. Mem. iii. 4. 3.

§ 5. *The Expenses of the Choregia.*

It will now be possible to form some conception of the expenses which the choregus had to meet. The principal item was the hire of the chorus during the whole period of training. This part of the expenditure was borne entirely by the choregus without any assistance from the state<sup>1</sup>. Then again, he had to provide an instructor for his chorus. As the competition between rich choregi was of the keenest character, the services of a really good instructor must have been expensive. In the third place, a flute-player was required. In the dithyrambic choruses the flute-players were selected by the state, and assigned by lot to the choregi. But in the dramatic choruses they appear to have been chosen by the choregus himself, who would therefore have to pay their salary<sup>2</sup>. Fourthly, the various mute characters that appeared upon the stage, such as the attendants upon kings and queens, were supplied by the choregus. This is proved by the story in Plutarch of a tragedian at Athens who was going to act the part of a queen, and who refused to perform unless the choregus would provide him with a train of female attendants dressed in expensive fashion<sup>3</sup>. The number and splendour of the mute characters would add greatly to the magnificence of the spectacle, and form a considerable item in the expenses

<sup>1</sup> Xen. Resp. Athen. i. 13 χορηγοῦσι μὲν οἱ πλούσιοι, χορηγεῖται δὲ ὁ δῆμος . . . ἀετοὶ οὖν ἀργύριον λαμβάνειν ὁ δῆμος καὶ ἔδων καὶ τρέχων καὶ ὀρχοῦμενος . . . ἵνα αὐτὸς τε ἔχη καὶ οἱ πλούσιοι πενέστεροι γίγνωνται. First Arg. to Demosth. Meidias, p. 509 χορηγὸς . . . ὁ δὲ ἀναλώματα παρέχων τὰ περὶ τὸν χορὸν. Plut. Glor. Athen. 349 B. The statement of the Scholiast on Dionysius Thrax (Bekk. Anecd. p. 746), that every comic and tragic poet was supplied with a chorus 'supported by the state,' appears to be merely a loose way of saying that the dramatic choruses were provided by choregi appointed by the state. The author of the 2nd Arg. to the Meidias

says that the choregus 'received sums of money for the support of the chorus.' But his authority is of the weakest description. He is quite mistaken as to the Dionysiac festivals, imagining that the Great Dionysia was a triennial affair, as opposed to the Small or annual celebration. Hence his testimony is of no value in the face of other authorities.

<sup>2</sup> The name of the flute-player is inserted in all dithyrambic records except the earliest, but never in the dramatic records. This seems to show that their status was different, and that the dramatic flute-player was not appointed officially.

<sup>3</sup> Plut. Phocion, p. 750 C.

of a wealthy choregus. It is also probable that in early times, when the actors were chosen by the poets, their salary was paid by the choregus. But later the selection and payment of the actors were undertaken entirely by the state<sup>1</sup>. The principal part then of the expenditure of the choregus consisted in paying the salaries of the various persons just mentioned. In addition to this, he had to provide the dresses of the chorus, which were often very magnificent. For example, the comic poet Antiphanes mentions the case of a choregus who ruined himself by dressing his chorus in gold. Demosthenes supplied his chorus of men with golden crowns<sup>2</sup>. Sometimes the love of splendour degenerated into mere vulgar ostentation. Unnecessary magnificence in the appointments of a comic chorus is mentioned by Aristotle as a proof of vulgarity. On the other hand, economical choregi saved expense by hiring second-hand dresses from the dealers in theatrical costumes<sup>3</sup>. Another item in the expenses of the choregia was the supply of dresses for the various mute characters and subordinate personages. With the dresses of the actors themselves the choregus had probably nothing to do. As for the ordinary kinds of scenery, they were part of the permanent fixtures of the theatre, and would be provided by the lessee. But when anything very special in the way of scenery was required by the necessities of a particular play, it is most probable that the expenses in such cases were borne by the choregus. As far, then, as can be gathered from ancient notices, the expenses of the choregia consisted in the hire of the chorus, the instructor, the flute-player, and the mute characters; in providing dresses for the chorus and the mute characters; and in supplying such exceptional scenery as the theatre did not possess.

A choregus who was anxious for victory, and who was ready to spend money over the production of the play, would easily

<sup>1</sup> The actors were assigned by the state to the poets, and not to the choregi: hence it is quite clear that in later times the choregi did not pay for them. See Suidas v. *νεμήσεις υποκριτῶν*.

<sup>2</sup> Antiphanes apud Athen. p. 103 E; Dem. Meid. § 16.

<sup>3</sup> Aristot. Eth. Nic. iv. 6. Pollux vii. 78 τοὺς δὲ τὰς ἐσθῆτας ἀπομισθοῦντας τοῖς χορηγοῖς οἱ μὲν νέοι ἱματιομίσθας ἐκάλουν, οἱ δὲ παλαιοὶ ἱματιομισθατάς.

be put to very considerable expense. The defendant in one of the speeches of Lysias gives some interesting details about the expenses of the different kinds of choruses. He is enumerating the various public burdens which he undertook since he was enrolled as a citizen, and the amount of money which he spent upon each of them. A tragic chorus cost him thirty minae. He spent sixteen minae upon a comic chorus, and fifteen upon a chorus of boys. It follows that a comic chorus was only about half as expensive as a tragic one, and cost about the same as a chorus of boys. On the other hand, a chorus of men at the City Dionysia cost fifty minae. These figures bear out the statement of Demosthenes, that a chorus of men was much more expensive than a tragic chorus. The chorus of men consisted of fifty members; and the payment of so large a number, together with the dresses and crowns which the choregi used to provide them with, would easily account for the expense. A tragic chorus consisted of only fifteen members, and yet it cost about twice as much as a comic chorus, which consisted of twenty-four. But we must remember that the tragic chorus had to perform in several plays, the comic chorus in only one. Also it does not appear to have been customary to spend very much money upon a comedy. In another speech of Lysias, a certain Aristophanes is said to have expended fifty minae over two tragic choruses. He was therefore rather more economical than the person mentioned above, who spent thirty minae over one<sup>1</sup>. It would be very interesting to be able to form some conception of the amount which these sums would represent at the present day. But of course it is exceedingly hard to find a standard by which to measure the comparative value of money in two such different civilizations as that of ancient Athens and that of modern England. It appears that in the time of Aristophanes the daily wages for common and unskilled labour were three obols<sup>2</sup>. If we take as a modern equivalent the case of the

<sup>1</sup> Lysias orat. xxi. §§ 1-5, xix. §§ 29, 42; Dem. Meid. § 156.

<sup>2</sup> Aristoph. Eccles. 307; Böckh,

Public Economy of Athens, i. p. 157 (Engl. transl.).



agricultural labourer who gets ten shillings a week, or one shilling and eight-pence per day, it follows that three obols in ancient Attica were equivalent to about one shilling and eight-pence at the present time. If this calculation is anywhere near the mark, then a choregus who spent thirty minae on a tragic chorus would be spending a sum equivalent to about £500 of our money. The sixteen minae paid for a comic chorus would represent about £266. Comparisons of this kind are very conjectural; but they enable one to form some idea of the immense sums of money which must have been spent at Athens in the course of a single year upon dramatic and choral performances. There were eight dramatic and ten dithyrambic choruses at the City Dionysia. There were seven or eight dramatic choruses at the Lenaea. Besides this there were dithyrambic choruses at the Thargelia, Prometheia, and Hephaestea; and dithyrambic and pyrrhic choruses at the Panathenaea. The expenses of all these choruses were drawn from a single small state, about the size of an English county, in which wealth was by no means abundant. It is easy therefore to see that there was not much exaggeration in the complaint of Demosthenes, that the Athenians spent more upon their festivals than they ever spent upon a naval expedition<sup>1</sup>.

If the choregi neglected their duties, and were careless about the efficiency of their choruses, it was the duty of the archon to bring pressure to bear upon them<sup>2</sup>. But such interference was not often necessary. On the contrary the rivalry between the choregi was so keen, and their desire for victory so great, that it often led them into expenses which they could not afford. Demosthenes says that men frequently spent all their property upon these competitions<sup>3</sup>. The choregus in Antiphanes has already been referred to, who reduced himself to beggary by his extravagance in providing golden dresses for his chorus. Besides the mere spirit of emulation there was another induce-

<sup>1</sup> Demosth. Philipp. i. § 35.

<sup>2</sup> Xen. Hiero ix. 4 καὶ γὰρ ὅταν χοροὶς ἡμῖν βουλόμεθα ἀγωνίζεσθαι, ἅθλα μὲν ὁ ἄρχων προτίθησιν, ἀπορίζω δὲ

αὐτοὺς προστέτακται χορηγοῖς καὶ ἄλλοις διδάσκειν, καὶ ἀνάγκην προστιθέναι τοῖς ἐνδεῶς τι ποιοῦσιν.

<sup>3</sup> Dem. Meid. § 61.

ment to lavish vast sums upon these choregic displays. For a wealthy politician it was an easy means of gaining popularity, and increasing his influence in the state. Nicias is said to have owed a great deal of his power to the splendour of his choruses, upon which he spent more money than any of his contemporaries or predecessors<sup>1</sup>. With the double motives of ambition and emulation at work, it was natural that considerable jealousy should be excited between the rival choregi, the 'anti-choregi,' as they were called. Sometimes this hostility ended in blows. When Taureas and Alcibiades were competitors with choruses of boys, a dispute having arisen as to the parentage of one of the boys in Alcibiades' chorus, the matter ended in a personal conflict in the orchestra<sup>2</sup>. Demosthenes, in his speech against Meidias, cites many examples of the bitterness and animosity with which choregi regarded one another. He adds that there would have been some excuse for the assault of Meidias upon himself if it had been caused by the jealousy of a rival choregus<sup>3</sup>.

#### § 6. *The Performances in the Theatre.*

When the preparations were all completed, a few days before the actual festival there was a preliminary ceremony called the Proagon. It took place in the Odeion, a sort of smaller theatre to the south of the Acropolis, not far from the theatre of Dionysus. The Proagon was a kind of show or spectacle, and served as an introduction to the actual performances at the festival. Each of the tragic poets who were about to compete in the approaching contest appeared upon the stage in the presence of the people, accompanied by his choregus, his actors, and the members of the chorus. All of them wore crowns upon their heads; but the actors were without their masks and their stage dresses. As they paraded upon the stage some announcement was made to the people, of which the exact nature is not known. But it is very likely that

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch Nicias, p. 524 D.

<sup>2</sup> Andocid. Alcibiad. § 20.

<sup>3</sup> Dem. Meid. §§ 58-66.

this occasion was taken for making known to the people the names of the poet and his actors, together with the titles of the tragedies shortly to be performed, and other information of a similar character. At the same time the people would have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with poets and actors who were making their first appearance. The splendour of the dresses of choruses and choregi, upon which great sums of money were spent, would make a spectacle of some magnificence, and appeal to the popular taste. At the Proagon which followed shortly after the death of Euripides it is said that Sophocles appeared upon the stage in a dark-coloured dress, and introduced his actors and chorus without the usual crowns. It is nowhere definitely stated that the comic and dithyrambic poets and choruses took part in the Proagon. But the whole of our information about the ceremony is derived from one or two brief and casual notices, in which very few details are given. It is hardly probable that only tragedy should have been represented. The magnificence of the spectacle would be very much increased by the large and gorgeously-dressed choruses of boys and men<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Our knowledge of the Proagon is derived from the following passages:—Schol. Aeschin. Ctesiph. § 67 ἐγγίγοντο πρὸ τῶν μεγάλων Διονυσίων ἡμέραις ὀλίγαις ἔμπροσθεν ἐν τῷ ᾧδεῖν καλουμένῳ τῶν τραγῳδῶν ἀγῶν καὶ ἐπίδειξις ὧν μέλλονσι δραμάτων ἀγωνίζεσθαι ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ· οὗ δ' ἐτύμους προάγων καλεῖται. εἰσίσιασι δὲ δίχα προσώπων οἱ ὑποκριταὶ γυμνοί. Vita Euripid. λέγουσι δὲ καὶ Σοφοκλέα, ἀκούσαντα ὅτι ἐτελεύτησε, αὐτὸν μὲν ἱματίῳ φαῖφ ἦτοι πορφυρῷ προελθεῖν, τὸν δὲ χορὸν καὶ τοὺς ὑποκριτὰς ἀστεφανώτους εἰσαγαγεῖν ἐν τῷ προάγωνι, καὶ δακρύσαι τὸν δῆμον. Aeschin. Ctesiph. §§ 66, 67 ὁ γὰρ μισαλέξανδρος νυνὶ φάσκων εἶναι . . . γράφει ψήφισμα . . . ἐκκλησίαν ποιεῖν τοὺς πρυτάνεις τῇ ὕγδῃ ἱσταμένον τοῦ ἐλαφροβολιδῶνος μηνός, ὅτ' ἦν τῷ Ἀσκληπιῷ ἡ θυσία καὶ ὁ προάγων. Schol. Aristoph. Wasps 1104 οἱ δ' ἐν ᾧδεῖν ἔστι τόπος θεατροειδῆς, ἐν ᾧ εἰώθασι τὰ ποιήματα ἀπαγγέλλειν

πρὶν τῆς εἰς τὸ θέατρον ἀπαγγελίας. That the Proagon was a contest is out of the question. The contest was to follow some days later. Nor can it have been a dress rehearsal, as part of one day would not have sufficed for the rehearsal of twelve tragedies and five comedies. Προάγων denotes 'the ceremony before the contest,' just as πρόγamos means 'the ceremony before the marriage.' The word ἀπαγγέλλειν, in the note of the Scholiast on the Wasps, must denote some announcement about the plays, and not an actual performance of them. That there was a Proagon before the Lenaea as well as the City Dionysia seems natural in itself, and is implied by the use of the plural in such inscriptions as Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 307 ἐπετέλεσε δὲ καὶ τοὺς προάγωνας τοὺς ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς κ.τ.λ. The passage in Plato's Symposium 194 A (ἐπιλήσμων μὲντ' ἂν εἶην, ᾧ Ἀγάθων, . . . εἰ ἰδὼν τὴν

During the period of the actual contests the audience met in the theatre every morning soon after daybreak. Considering the number of plays which had to be produced, it was necessary that the proceeding should begin at an early hour<sup>1</sup>. The vast gathering of spectators, like all public meetings at Athens, was first of all purified by the offer of a small sacrifice. Then libations were poured in front of the statue of the god Dionysus<sup>2</sup>. If the festival was the City Dionysia, before the tragedies began the opportunity was taken to proclaim the names of citizens upon whom crowns had been bestowed, together with the services for which they had been granted. The proclamation before such a vast multitude of citizens was naturally considered a very great honour<sup>3</sup>. During the period of Athenian supremacy another striking ceremony preceded the tragedies at the City Dionysia. The tribute collected from the dependent states was divided into talents, and solemnly deposited in the orchestra<sup>4</sup>. Then the orphans whose fathers had been killed in battle, and who had been educated by the state, and had now reached the age of manhood, were brought forward upon the stage equipped in complete armour. The herald made a proclamation, recounting what the state had done for them, and they were then publicly discharged from state control to take their place as ordinary citizens<sup>5</sup>. After these preliminaries had been gone through the dramatic performances commenced. The order in which the different plays were to be performed was determined by lot<sup>6</sup>. Each poet, as his turn came, was summoned by name by the public herald and ordered to produce his play. The phrase employed seems to have been 'lead in your chorus.' But it is not likely that the poet appeared in person at the head of his chorus.

σὴν ἀνδρείαν καὶ μεγαλοφροσύνην ἀναβαίνοντος ἐπὶ τὸν ἀκρίβαντα μετὰ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν καὶ βλέψαντος ἐναντία τοσοῦτω θαύτρῳ, μέλλοντος ἐπιδείξασθαι σαντοῦ λόγους, καὶ οὐδ' ὀπωσιοῦν ἐκπλαγέντος κ.τ.λ.) probably refers to the Proagon.

<sup>1</sup> Aeschin. Ctesiph. § 76 ἅμα τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἡγείτο τοῖς πρέσβεσιν εἰς τὸ θέατρον. Demosth. Meid. § 74.

<sup>2</sup> Suidas v. καθάρσιον; Pollux viii. 104; Plut. Cimon p. 483 E; Philostrat. vit. Apoll. p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> Aeschin. Ctesiph. §§ 48, 230.

<sup>4</sup> Isocrat. viii. § 82.

<sup>5</sup> Aeschin. Ctesiph. §§ 153, 154.

<sup>6</sup> Aristid. περὶ ρητορικῆς, vol. ii. p. 2 (Dindf.).

And in fact most plays began with speeches from the stage, and the chorus only came in later on. The phrase was an old formula, applicable to the times when tragedy and comedy were mainly lyrical, and the poet was the chief actor and led in his chorus in person. It was retained after its literal significance had become obsolete<sup>1</sup>. The summons to each poet was accompanied in later times by the blowing of a trumpet, a custom which originated as follows. On one occasion an actor called Hermon had left the building, expecting that his comedy would come on late. But as it was called for sooner than he expected, there was a hitch in the proceedings owing to his absence. The blowing of the trumpet was therefore instituted to mark the commencement of each new performance, and let people in the neighbourhood of the theatre know at what rate the contest was progressing<sup>2</sup>. The order in which the poets competed was determined by lot, as stated above. It was considered an advantage to be drawn last, as the latest performance left the most vivid impression upon the minds of the judges. This would be especially the case in such competitions as lasted over three days. The Ecclesiazusae of Aristophanes was drawn first for performance. The poet therefore, in the course of this play, implores the judges not to let the ballot damage his chances, but to judge the choruses on their merits, unlike the courtesans, who forget all except their latest lovers<sup>3</sup>.

At the end of each competition the judges wrote their verdicts upon tablets. Five of these tablets were drawn by lot, and decided the result. The names of the victorious poet and choregus were then proclaimed by the herald, and they were crowned with a chaplet of ivy in the presence of the spectators. At the conclusion of the festival the successful poet celebrated his victory by a solemn sacrifice, followed by

<sup>1</sup> Aristoph. Acharn. 11 ὁ δ' ἀνείπεν, εἰσαγ', ὦ θεόγχι, τὸν χορόν. The passage from Philochorus (Athen. p. 464 E καὶ τοῖς χοροῖς εἰσιούσιν ἐνέχεον πίνειν καὶ διηγωνισμένοις ὅτ' ἐξεπορεύοντο ἐνέχεον πάλιν) affords no warrant for assuming, with Müller (Griech.

Bühnen. p. 373), that before the commencement of each play the poet and his chorus entered the orchestra and offered a libation to Dionysus.

<sup>2</sup> Pollux iv. 88.

<sup>3</sup> Aristoph. Eccles. 1154 ff.

a grand banquet, at which most of his friends were present. The members of the chorus were also there, and probably the choregus and the actors. The scene of Plato's Symposium is laid in Agathon's house the day after the banquet in honour of his first tragic victory. Socrates had avoided the banquet itself, because of the crush of people, but came next day to a more private gathering<sup>1</sup>. A victory, especially at the City Dionysia, was regarded as a splendid distinction. On one occasion Ion of Chios, after winning the first prize in both the tragic and the dithyrambic contests at the same festival, showed the extent of his joy by making a present of a jar of Chian wine to every Athenian citizen<sup>2</sup>.

The next day but one after the conclusion of the City Dionysia a special assembly of the people was convened in the theatre of Dionysus to discuss matters connected with the festival. No doubt a similar assembly was held after the Lenaea, though the fact is nowhere actually stated. At this assembly the conduct of the archon, who had had the management of the festival which was just over, was taken into consideration. Any neglect of his duties, or any unfairness in the choice of poets and actors, would be punished. At the same time crowns and other distinctions were voted in honour of officials who had performed their duties in connexion with the festival satisfactorily. It has been pointed out that the judges in the dramatic and dithyrambic contests were liable to prosecution and punishment if they were suspected of dishonesty in their verdicts. Probably such charges were brought forward and decided at this assembly in the theatre. Then came the hearing of complaints as to any violation of the sanctity of the festival. It was illegal during the days of the festival to make distraints upon debtors. All assaults and offences against the person, however trifling in themselves, were regarded as sacrilege if they were committed during the festival. Complaints of this kind were brought forward at the assembly in the theatre, and a special procedure called the *Proboule* was adopted

<sup>1</sup> Plat. *Symp.* 173 A, 174 A.

<sup>2</sup> Athen. p. 3 F; Schol. Aristoph. Pax 835.

in regard to them. The aggrieved person stated his charges before the assembled people: the defendant made his reply: the people then proceeded to vote. If they acquitted the defendant there was an end of the matter. But if they voted against him the prosecutor then carried the case before the ordinary law courts, where of course the previous verdict of the people weighed very much in his favour<sup>1</sup>.

### § 7. *Reproduction of Old Plays.*

The process of bringing out a play at Athens has now been traced from first to last, from the selection of the poet by the archon to the meeting of the people in the theatre at the conclusion of the festival. Hitherto only the production of new and original plays has been discussed. The reproduction of old ones is a matter of some interest in connexion with the history of the theatre. At Athens, during the fifth century, when the drama was in its most flourishing state, plays were usually exhibited once, and once only. A repetition of the same play was a most exceptional occurrence. The reasons are obvious. The Athenians had only two festivals in the whole year at which regular theatrical performances could be held. Consequently, as long as the creative period of the drama lasted, the few days at their disposal barely sufficed even for a single performance of the various new compositions. Repeated performances would have seriously curtailed the amount of available time. Nor were such repetitions necessary. The theatre at Athens was of enormous size, so that every man had a chance of seeing a play when it was first brought out. If it was successful, and he wished to see it again, he had numerous opportunities of doing so at the Rural Dionysia, where reproductions were the rule. For these reasons the Athenian stage of the fifth century was confined almost exclusively to original works. When a play had once been performed, it was never seen again, as far as Athens was con-

<sup>1</sup> Demosth. Meid. §§ 8-10; Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 114, 307, 420.

cerned, unless it happened to be of extraordinary merit. It is stated on the authority of Dicaearchus that the Frogs of Aristophanes 'was so much admired on account of its parabasis that it was actually repeated<sup>1</sup>.' The language here used implies that such a repetition was a very unusual circumstance. It is true that when the Capture of Miletus, the historical play of Phrynichus, caused so much commotion in the theatre, the Athenians are said to have passed a law that 'for the future no one should exhibit this drama<sup>2</sup>.' But the law must have referred to its reproduction at the Rural Dionysia.

At Athens then during the fifth century even successful plays were only exhibited once. But if a play was unsuccessful, the poet was allowed to revise and rewrite it, and to compete with it again in its improved shape<sup>3</sup>. The revision of unsuccessful plays seems to have been a common practice with the Athenian dramatic writers. It is mentioned as rather a peculiarity in the comic poet Anaxandrides, that when one of his comedies was unsuccessful, he used to destroy it at once, without taking the trouble to emend it, and try his fortunes with it a second time<sup>4</sup>. Many plays were revised and re-exhibited in this manner, and in consequence many plays existed in ancient times in a double form. Such was the case with the Lemnian Women of Sophocles, and the Autolycus and Phrixus of Euripides<sup>5</sup>. The Hippolytus of Euripides which we at present possess is a revised edition pruned of its original defects<sup>6</sup>. The Clouds of Aristophanes on its first appearance was very unsuccessful, and was altered in many important particulars before it reached the form in which it has come down to us<sup>7</sup>. Among the other plays of Aristophanes, the Peace, the Plutus, and the Thesmophoriazusae were brought out a second time in a corrected form<sup>8</sup>. Instances of the revision of plays are not uncommon among

<sup>1</sup> Arg. Aristoph. Ran. οὕτω δὲ ἐθαυμάσθη τὸ δράμα διὰ τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ παράβασιν ὥστε καὶ ἀνεδιδάχθη, ὡς φησι Δικαίαρχος.

<sup>2</sup> Herod. vi. 21.

<sup>3</sup> A revised edition of a play was called *διασκευή*, Athen. p. 110 C.

<sup>4</sup> Athen. p. 374 A.

<sup>5</sup> Nauck, Frag. Trag. Graec. pp. 215, 441, 627.

<sup>6</sup> Arg. Eur. Hipp.

<sup>7</sup> Arg. Aristoph. Nub.

<sup>8</sup> Arg. Aristoph. Pax; Meineke, Frag. Com. Graec. pp. 1074, 1130.



the writers of the Middle and New Comedy. Sometimes the original title was retained in the revised version, as for instance in the *Heiress* of Menander. Sometimes a new title was adopted. Thus the Braggart Captain of Diphilus appeared subsequently as the Eunuch<sup>1</sup>.

It seems then that during the fifth century the dramatic competitions at Athens were mostly limited to new plays, or to plays which had been so far altered and revised as to be equivalent to new ones. The one exception to the rule was in the case of Aeschylus. In the *Life of Aeschylus* it is said that the Athenians felt such an admiration for him, that they passed a decree after his death that any one who offered to exhibit his plays should receive a chorus from the archon. This does not mean that his plays were to be performed as a mere isolated exhibition, apart from the regular contests. Such a reproduction of old plays appears to have been unknown at Athens during the fifth century. The meaning is that any person might be allowed to compete at the ordinary tragic contests with plays of Aeschylus instead of new plays of his own. If any one offered to do so, the archon was bound to give him a chorus. He would then take his place as one of the three competing poets; but while his rivals exhibited new and original tragedies, he would confine himself to reproducing tragedies of Aeschylus. Probably the men who undertook these revivals were in most cases celebrated actors. In this way the plays of Aeschylus were often brought into competition with the plays of later writers, and appear to have been generally successful. Philostratus refers to the custom<sup>2</sup>. He says that the Athenians invited Aeschylus after his death to the festivals of Dionysus, and that his plays were acted over again, and were victorious a second time. This passage makes it quite clear that the tragedies of Aeschylus were exhibited in the ordinary contests, and not as a separate per-

<sup>1</sup> Meineke, iv. 116, 377. Additional instances of revision of plays are to be found in the *Autolycus* of Eupolis, the *Synoris* of Diphilus, and the *Phryx* of Alexis. The *Demetrius* of Alexis

appeared subsequently as the *Philetærus*, the *Ἀγροικοί* of Antiphanes as the *Batalion*. See Meineke, ii. 440; iii. 36, 403, 500; iv. 412.

<sup>2</sup> Philostrat. vit. Apoll. p. 245.

formance by themselves. There is a reference in the beginning of the *Acharnians* to a competition of this kind. Dicaeopolis had come to the theatre to see the tragic contests. He was expecting that the performance would commence with plays of Aeschylus; but to his disgust the frigid Theognis was the first to be called upon<sup>1</sup>. Here then is a picture of a contest in which the tragic poet Theognis was opposed by a competitor who exhibited, not plays of his own, but plays of Aeschylus. It is to the practice of reproducing his plays after his death that Aeschylus alludes in the *Frogs*, when he remarks that his poetry has not died with him, like that of Euripides<sup>2</sup>. Quintilian refers to the same custom, though his language is not quite accurate. He says that the tragedies of Aeschylus were sublime, but rough and unfinished; and therefore the Athenians permitted subsequent poets to polish and revise them, and exhibit them at the competitions in their amended form; and in this way many of them won the prize<sup>3</sup>. This story of the revision of the plays of Aeschylus by subsequent poets is not confirmed by anything in the Greek authorities, nor is it probable in itself. In the fourth century a law was passed providing for the preservation of the exact original text of the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides<sup>4</sup>. It is hardly likely that the Athenians of the fifth century should have been less conservative about the text of Aeschylus than the Athenians of the fourth, to whose taste Aeschylus had begun to seem antiquated. It is most probable therefore that the story of the subsequent correction of the plays is a mistake of Quintilian's.

From this reproduction of old plays of Aeschylus must be carefully distinguished those instances where plays, which Aeschylus had left unpublished at his death, were produced for the first time by his son Euphorion. It is said that Euphorion won four victories with his father's unpublished tragedies. In a similar manner the *Oedipus Coloneus* of Sophocles was produced for the first time by his grandson

<sup>1</sup> Aristoph. *Acharn.* 9-12.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* *Ran.* 868.

<sup>3</sup> Quint. *Inst.* x. 1. 66.

<sup>4</sup> Plut. *X orat.* 841 F.

four years after the poet's death. And after the death of Euripides, his Iphigeneia in Aulis, Alcmaeon, and Bacchae were brought out by his son at the City Dionysia<sup>1</sup>. On such occasions as these, when a poet's unpublished plays were exhibited by a relative after his death, although no doubt the real authorship of the plays was perfectly well known at the time, the relative appeared as the nominal author. He asked for a chorus from the archon in his own name. The plays he produced were new ones. There is therefore no similarity between instances of this kind, and those occasions when a man asked for a chorus, not in his own name, but in order to produce old plays of Aeschylus.

At Athens then during the fifth century the reproduction of old plays was confined to tragedies of Aeschylus, and remarkably successful dramas such as the Frogs of Aristophanes. Otherwise when a play had been once exhibited on the Athenian stage, it was relegated to the Rural Dionysia. It was not till the fourth century that the reproduction of old plays developed into a regular custom. The practice was at first confined to tragedy. This branch of the drama had passed beyond the period of healthy growth, and already showed symptoms of decay. The three great tragic poets of the fifth century had in their several lines exhausted the capabilities of Attic tragedy. Their successors were mostly feeble imitators of Euripides. Under such circumstances the tendency to fall back upon the early drama naturally became more prevalent. In the records of the City Dionysia during the latter half of the fourth century it is found that the series of new tragedies was invariably preceded by the performance of an old one<sup>2</sup>. The same practice was also no doubt adopted at the Lenaea. The actors who had the privilege of conducting these revivals would be selected by the archon, probably after a small preliminary competition of the kind described in the previous chapter<sup>3</sup>. It appears

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. *Ἐπιφάνειαν*; Arg. Soph. Oed. Col.; Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 67.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 60.

that these actors, in preparing the old plays for reproduction, were sometimes inclined to tamper with the text, and to introduce what they considered improvements, just as the plays of Shakespeare were adapted for the stage by Garrick in the last century. A law was passed by the orator Lycurgus to put a stop to this practice. It was enacted that a public copy should be made of the works of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and deposited in the state archives; and that the actors, in their performances, should not be allowed to deviate from the text of the copy<sup>1</sup>. It is very probable that this authorised version eventually found its way to Alexandria. Ptolemy the Third was a great collector of manuscripts. He borrowed from the Athenians an old copy of the works of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, promising to return it after he had made a transcript, and depositing fifteen talents as security. The transcript was made in the best possible style. Ptolemy then proceeded to keep the original manuscript for himself, and sent back merely the transcript to Athens. The Athenians had to console themselves with the fifteen talents which were forfeited. This old copy of the tragic writers was most probably that made in accordance with the law of Lycurgus<sup>2</sup>.

Athenian comedy, as was previously pointed out, continued to grow and develop long after tragedy had been reduced to a state of stagnation. The need for the reproduction of old comedies was not therefore felt until a much later epoch. The first recorded instances of revivals of this kind belong to the second century B.C. The system which was then introduced appears to have been identical with that adopted in the case of tragedy. A single old comedy was exhibited at each festival as a prelude to the new ones. As far as our information goes

<sup>1</sup> Plut. X orat. 841 F εἰσήνεγκε δὲ καὶ νόμους . . . τὸν δὲ, ὡς χαλκᾶς εἰκόνας ἀναθεῖναι τῶν ποιητῶν, Αἰσχύλου, Σοφοκλέους, Εὐριπίδου, καὶ τὰς τραγῳδίας αὐτῶν ἐν κοινῇ γραφάμενους φυλάττειν, καὶ τὸν τῆς πόλεως γραμματεῖα παραγγέλλειν τοῖς ὑποκρινομένοις οὐκ ἐξεῖναι γὰρ αὐτὰς ὑποκρίνεσθαι. The general

meaning of the passage is clear, though the text is corrupt. Various emendations have been proposed, e.g. παρ' αὐτὰς ὑποκρίνεσθαι, Wytttenbach; αὐτὰς ἄλλως ὑποκρίνεσθαι, Gysar; γὰρ ἄλλως ὑποκρίνεσθαι, Dübner.

<sup>2</sup> Galen Comm. ii. on Hippocrat. Epidem. iii. (p. 607 Kühn).

the specimen selected was taken in every case from the works of Menander and his contemporaries<sup>1</sup>.

To turn once more to tragedy. The fourth century was an age of great actors, just as the fifth century had been an age of great poets. The principal actors of the fourth century filled a more important place in the history of tragedy than the dramatic poets themselves. Their fame was chiefly derived from their impersonations of characters out of the great tragedies of the past. A novel interpretation of a celebrated role, such as that of Antigone or Medea, was a much greater event in dramatic circles, and excited far more discussion, than the production of a new play. In exactly the same way the great English actors of the last hundred years or so are remembered, not so much for the new dramas which they brought out, as for their impersonation of parts like Hamlet and Othello. From the numerous references to Athenian actors of the fourth century, and to the old tragedies which they exhibited, it is possible to glean some interesting facts in regard to these revivals. We are able to trace the course of the popular taste, and to discover who were the favourite poets, and which were the plays in most demand. The three great masters of tragedy, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, occupied a position by themselves in popular estimation, and quite overshadowed all other poets. This is proved by the law of Lycurgus providing for the strict preservation of the text of their works, and prohibiting the interpolations of the actors. But though the existence of the law shows that the tragedies of Aeschylus were occasionally reproduced, and were therefore liable to corruption, it does not appear that in this later age Aeschylus was very popular upon the stage. The only allusion to a particular revival of his plays is that which occurs in one of the letters of Alciphron, where the tragic actor Licymnius is said to have been victorious in the Propompi of Aeschylus<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand the reproductions of plays of Sophocles and Euripides are very frequently referred to. And it is

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 33 and 41.

<sup>2</sup> Alciphron Epist. iii. 48.

a significant fact that when the actor Satyrus was consoling Demosthenes for the ill-success of his first speech before the assembly, and wished to point out to him the defectiveness of his elocution, he asked him to repeat 'a speech out of Sophocles or Euripides,' implying that these were the two poets whom every one knew<sup>1</sup>. In the Poetics of Aristotle the laws of the drama are based upon the plays of Sophocles and Euripides, while Aeschylus is comparatively disregarded. The simplicity of his plots and the elevation and occasional obscurity of his language were distasteful to an age which looked for ingenuity in the management of the incidents, and rhetorical facility in the style. These qualities were found to perfection in Euripides: hence his great popularity. There can be no doubt that Euripides was the favourite poet of the fourth century. A striking proof of the fact is supplied by the records of the tragic performances at the City Dionysia for the years 341-339 B.C. In each of these years the old tragedy selected for exhibition was one by Euripides. In 341 it was the Iphigeneia, in 340 it was the Orestes. The title of the play produced in 339 is lost, but the author was Euripides<sup>2</sup>. Other plays of his which were favourites upon the stage at this time were the Cresphontes, the Oenomaus, and the Hecuba, in all of which Aeschines is said to have played the part of tritagonist. The Oenomaus and the Hecuba are also mentioned as plays in which the great actor Theodorus was especially effective. In the dream of Thrasyllus before the battle of Arginusae the plays which were being acted were the Phoenissae and the Supplices of Euripides<sup>3</sup>. Though the story of the dream is apocryphal, these two tragedies were doubtless popular ones during the fourth century. As to the plays of Sophocles, it is said that Polus, the contemporary of Demosthenes, and the greatest actor of his time, was celebrated for his performance of the leading parts in the Oedipus Tyrannus, the Oedipus Coloneus, and the Electra. The Antigone of Sophocles was often acted

<sup>1</sup> Plut. Demosth. p. 849 A.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 973.

<sup>3</sup> Demosth. de Cor. §§ 180, 267;

Aelian Var. Hist. xiv. 40; Plut. Fort.

Alexand. 333 F; Diod. Sic. xiii. 97.

by Theodorus and by Aristodemus. A certain Timotheus used to make a great impression in the part of Ajax. Lastly, the Epigoni of Sophocles is mentioned in connexion with Andronicus, another contemporary of Demosthenes<sup>1</sup>. It is interesting to observe that of the plays which the popular taste of the fourth century had begun to select for revival by far the greater number are among those which are still extant.

<sup>1</sup> Aul. Gell. vii. 5; Stob. Flor. 97, Fals. Leg. § 246; Schol. Soph. Ajax  
28 (ii. p. 211 Meineke); Demosth. 865; Athen. p. 584 D.

## CHAPTER III

### THE THEATRE

#### § 1. *Introductory*

THE regulations concerning the dramatic competitions at Athens have now been described in detail, together with the circumstances attending the production of a play. The next point to be considered is the construction and general arrangement of the theatre. It would be beyond the scope of the present work to attempt to give an account of all the Greek theatres of which remains are in existence. In the following pages our attention will be confined mainly to the theatre of Dionysus at Athens, which will serve as a specimen of the Greek type of theatre in general<sup>1</sup>. The theatre at Athens, whether regarded from the historical or the architectural point of view, is one of the most interesting buildings in the world. It was apparently the first stone theatre erected in Greece, and may therefore be regarded as the prototype of all other ancient theatres, both Greek and Roman. It cannot indeed claim to have been contemporary with the most glorious period of the Attic drama. Recent investigations have shown that it was not built till after the middle of the fourth century. Still it occupied almost exactly the same site as the old wooden theatre in which the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and

<sup>1</sup> Throughout the present chapter my account of the existing remains of the Athenian theatre has been taken almost entirely from Dörpfeld and Reisch, *Das Griechische Theater*, 1896. Dörpfeld's

minute and admirable description of the theatre has superseded all previous treatises on the subject. For the old authorities see Preface to the First Edition, p. viii.



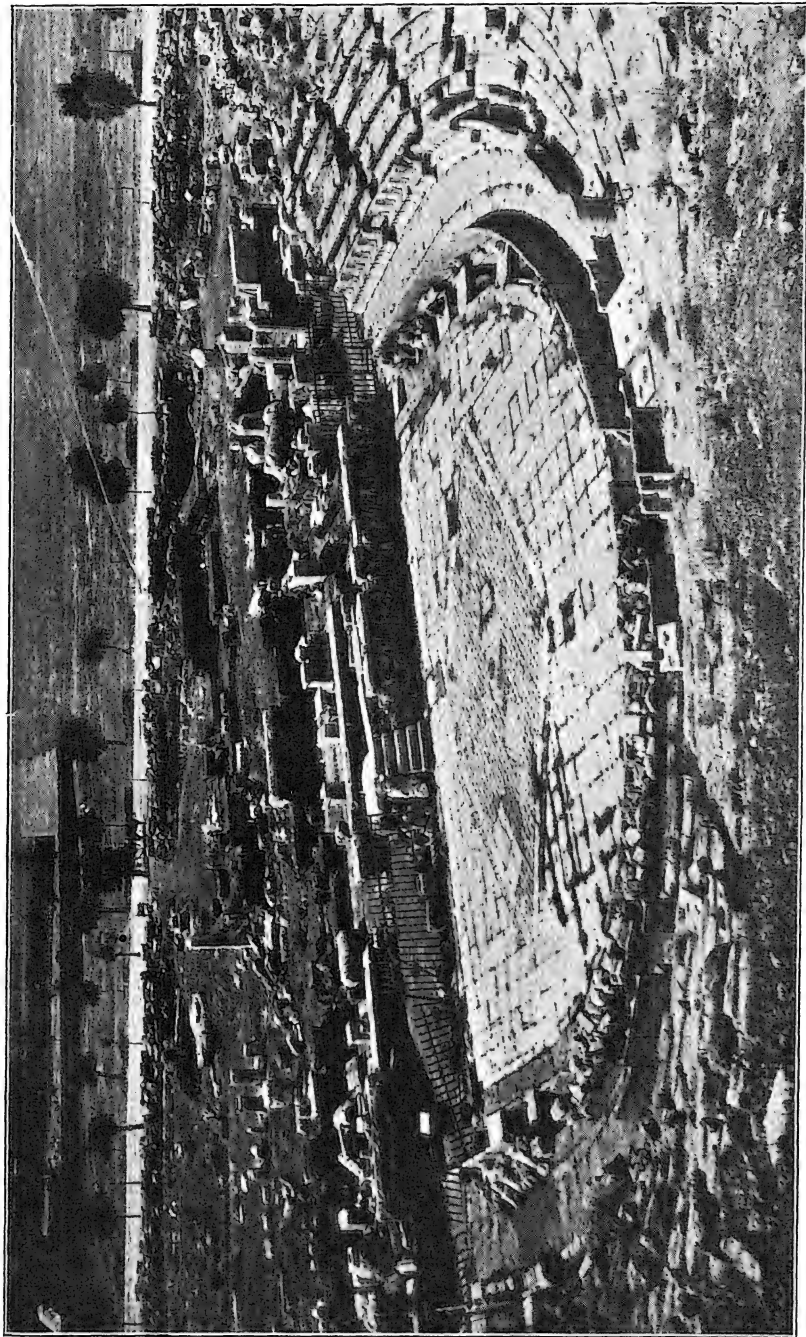
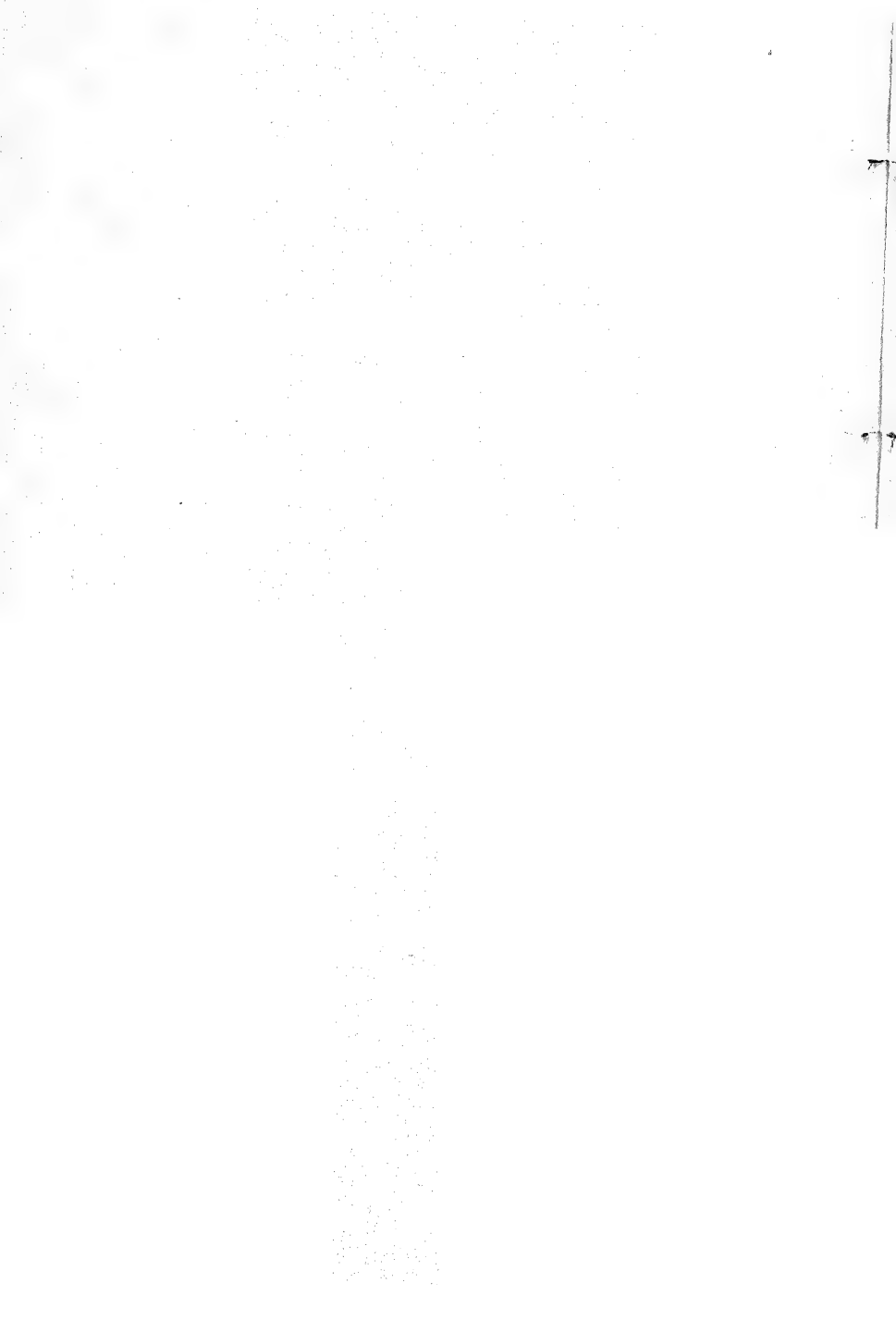


FIG. 2. THEATRE AT ATHENS, FROM THE NORTH.



Euripides were first exhibited. It no doubt reproduced in a more permanent form the main features and characteristics of that ancient theatre. It was itself the scene of those great revivals of Attic tragedy in the fourth century to which we have already alluded. In connexion with a building of such importance the smallest details are not without interest. The object of the chapter will be, firstly, to give an account of the existing remains and present condition of this theatre; secondly, to determine what must have been its original form and appearance, before the primitive design had been obscured by later alterations; thirdly, from the evidence thus collected, and from other sources, to draw such inferences as seem possible concerning the old theatre of the fifth century. It will be necessary at the same time to make occasional references to various other Greek theatres, both for the purpose of illustration and comparison, and also in order to fill up the gaps in our information caused by the ruinous condition of the Athenian theatre. Many of these other theatres have lately been excavated in a thorough and systematic manner, at Epidaurus, Megalopolis, Delos, Eretria, and elsewhere. The discoveries made in the course of the excavations have added greatly to our knowledge of the Greek stage.

The construction and general arrangement of a Greek theatre differed widely from any form of theatre to be found at the present day. In this respect, as in most others, a comparison between the ancient and modern drama reveals as many points of contrast as of similarity. The Greek theatre was exposed to the open air, and had no roof or covering of any kind. It was generally built upon the slope of a hill in or near the city. It was of enormous magnitude, compared with a modern theatre, being intended to contain at one and the same time the whole theatre-going population of the city. The largest part of it consisted of the auditorium, or tiers of seats for the spectators. These seats rose one above the other like a flight of steps, and were arranged in the form of a semi-circle with the two ends prolonged. The flat space at the bottom of the auditorium, corresponding to the stalls and pit

in a modern theatre, was called the orchestra or 'dancing-place,' and was used by the chorus only, the spectators being entirely excluded from it. At the further end of the orchestra, facing the tiers of seats, rose the stage and the stage buildings. The stage was a long platform, much narrower than a modern stage, and was reserved for the actors, as opposed to the chorus. Thus it is obvious that the general spectacle presented by the interior of a Greek theatre during the representation of a drama must have been quite unlike anything we are accustomed to in modern times. The open-air building, the performance in broad daylight, the vast crowds of spectators, the chorus grouped together in the centre, the actors standing on the narrow stage behind them—all these characteristics of a Greek theatrical exhibition must have combined to produce a scene to which there is no exact parallel at the present day. This fact should be kept clearly in view, in discussing all questions connected with the Greek stage. Many errors have been caused, and many unnecessary difficulties have been raised, owing to the failure to realise the essential difference between the external features of the ancient and the modern drama.

## § 2. *The old Wooden Theatres at Athens.*

The type of theatre described above was of course only developed very gradually by the Athenians. It came into existence side by side with the growth of their drama. At first there was no permanent theatre. Attic tragedy grew out of the dithyrambs performed by choruses in honour of Dionysus. For such exhibitions all that was required was an orchestra, or circular dancing-place. The chorus performed in the middle, the spectators ranged themselves all round the ring. The first innovation was the introduction of a dialogue between the coryphaeus and the choreutae in the intervals of the choral odes. For the purpose of carrying on this dialogue the coryphaeus used to mount upon the sacrificial table which stood beside the altar in the centre of

the orchestra<sup>1</sup>. Such sacrificial tables are often found in ancient vase paintings by the side of the regular altars, and were used for cutting up the victims, or for receiving various bloodless offerings such as cakes and vegetables<sup>2</sup>. Both the table and the altar were called by the same name, Thymele<sup>3</sup>. This table, on which the coryphaeus took his stand, surrounded by the choristers, was the prototype of the stage in the later Greek theatre. The next step in the development of the drama and of the theatre was the introduction of a single actor by Thespis. This actor took the part in the dialogue previously played by the coryphaeus. But the part was now much expanded and developed. The actor, instead of remaining in the centre of the orchestra throughout the performance, used to come and go, and appear in many roles in succession, using a different costume on each occasion. A booth was erected just outside the orchestra, for him to change his dress and mask in. The platform on which he stood during the delivery of the dialogue was removed from the centre of the orchestra, and placed immediately in front of the booth, to facilitate his exits and entrances. This change led inevitably to others. The chorus, which had previously stood in a circle round the coryphaeus, now drew themselves up in lines facing the actor's platform, so as to converse with him in a natural manner. The spectators, instead of being ranged all round the orchestra, were confined to two-thirds of it. The remaining portion was taken up by the stage.

Such then was the arrangement of the theatre in the latter part of the sixth century. There was a booth with a small

<sup>1</sup> Pollux iv. 123 ἐλεός δ' ἦν τράπεζα ἀρχαία, ἐφ' ἣν πρὸ Θέσπιδος εἰς τις ἀναβὰς τοῖς χορευταῖς ἀπεκρίνατο. Etym. Mag. v. θυμέλη· τράπεζα δὲ ἦν ἐφ' ἣς ἐστῶτες ἐν τοῖς ἀγροῖς ἦδον, μήπω τᾶν λαβούσης τραγῳδίας. Dörpfeld (Griechische Theater, pp. 34, 278) thinks the ἐλεός was the altar step, which in some cases was of great size. Cp. the specimen he gives on p. 34. He quotes Pollux iv. 123 θυμέλη, εἴτε βῆμά τι οὔσα, εἴτε βωμός. But this passage does not mean

that Pollux thought the thymele was partly an altar and partly a platform. It means that he was uncertain which of the two it was. Probably he was thinking of the later sense of θυμέλη = 'the stage.'

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Cook on the Thymele in Greek Theatres, Classical Review, October 1895, p. 371.

<sup>3</sup> Suidas v. σκηνὴ; Pollux iv. 123; Etym. Mag. v. θυμέλη.

platform for the actor. In front of it lay the orchestra, occupied by the chorus. The audience sat in rows round the orchestra, facing the platform. At this early period the seats provided for the audience were only temporary erections. They were called 'ikria,' and consisted of wooden benches rising in tiers one above the other, and resting on wooden supports<sup>1</sup>. The booth and platform were also mere temporary constructions of wood. But in these rude erections, hastily put up each year for the annual performances, were already to be found all the essential parts of the later Greek theatres. Nothing more was required than to change the material from wood to stone, and to introduce greater elaboration into the design. In course of time the old wooden benches developed into the magnificent amphitheatres of which the remains still survive. The booth and platform were converted into imposing stage-buildings. The recollection of their origin was preserved in their name. Even in the latest times, when the stage-buildings of a Greek theatre had come to be elaborate structures of stone, they were still called by the name 'skene,' which means properly a booth or tent.

In this sketch of the early history of the Greek theatre one point deserves especial notice. The most important part of the whole building, and that which formed the starting-point in the process of development, was the orchestra, or place for the chorus. The auditorium and the stage-buildings were only later additions. In all theatres of purely Greek origin the orchestra continued to maintain its prominent position. All other parts were subordinated to it. The general conception of a Greek theatre was that of a building with a circular dancing-place in the centre, and with tiers of seats arranged round two-thirds of the ring, while the remaining side was occupied by the stage. The result was that all the spectators had an equally good view of the orchestra, while many of

<sup>1</sup> Hesych. v. παρ' αἰγείρου θέα . . . τὰ ἰκρία, ἃ ἔστιν ὀρθὰ ξύλα ἔχοντα σανίδας προσδεμμένας, οἷον βαθμούς, ἐφ' αἷς ἐκαθέζοντο πρὸ τοῦ κατασκευασθῆναι τὸ

θέατρον. Cp. Bekk. Anecd. p. 354; Hesych. and Suidas v. ἰκρία; Eustath. Od. p. 1472.

them had only a very poor view of the stage. This arrangement was no doubt quite natural at first, when the chorus was still the most conspicuous feature in the drama. But it may seem remarkable that it should have been retained in later times. We should remember however that ancient theatres were built, not only for the drama, but also for choral and musical competitions of the most various kinds. Among the Greeks these latter were held solely in the orchestra, and had nothing to do with the stage. As they far exceeded the dramatic performances in number, it was essential in a Greek theatre that every member of the audience should have a clear and direct view of the orchestra; the view on to the stage was a matter of secondary importance. In Roman theatres the case was different. Here all performances, choral, musical, and dramatic, were transferred to the stage; the orchestra was given up to the spectators. The arrangements were therefore considerably modified. The orchestra and auditorium were reduced in size to a semicircle<sup>1</sup>. The consequence was that the stage became a much more prominent object, and that all the spectators had a fairly good view of it.

To return to the wooden theatres of the sixth century. As regards the place in which they were erected, two distinct traditions have been preserved by the ancient grammarians. Some of them say that, before the construction of a permanent theatre, all dramatic performances were held in the Lenaeon; others say that they were all held in the market-place<sup>2</sup>. Neither of these two traditions can be entirely correct. The remains of an old orchestra belonging to the sixth century have been discovered not many years ago in the enclosure of Dionysus Eleuthereus at the foot of the Acropolis. It follows therefore as a matter of practical certainty that the dramatic performances at the City Dionysia must have been

<sup>1</sup> All theatres, in which the orchestra consists of an exact semicircle, are either Roman, or built under Roman influence. See Vitruv. v. 6.

<sup>2</sup> They were held in the Lenaeon

according to Hesych. v. ἐν Ἀρναίῳ ἀγών, Phot. v. Ἀγναίων, Bekk. Anecd. p. 278; in the market-place according to Phot. v. ἱερία, Eustath. Od. p. 1472.

given from the first in this orchestra, within the enclosure of the god of the festival. No doubt in the same way the Lenaeon was the original site of the performances at the Lenaea; and to this extent the old grammarians are justified in their statement<sup>1</sup>. The tradition about the market-place is more doubtful. There were only two dramatic festivals in the year; and each, as we have just seen, had its appropriate enclosure, where theatres were erected. A third site for the same purpose seems unnecessary. If we could assume that the Lenaeon was identical with the site in the market-place, then all difficulty would be removed. But this identification, as was pointed out in the previous chapter, is extremely doubtful<sup>2</sup>. Possibly, however, the grammarians are right; and in early times, before the dramatic contests had been officially regulated, the market-place was sometimes used for dramatic representations. It would be a natural place to choose for such a purpose. Plato, referring to his ideal city, speaks of 'stages erected in the market-place' by the tragic poets<sup>3</sup>. Also there is no doubt that in ancient times the Athenian market-place contained an orchestra<sup>4</sup>. This orchestra disappeared in the course of the fifth century; but the position in which it originally stood continued to be called by the same name at a much later period. In Plato's time books were sold there. Socrates, in his Apology, remarks that any one could buy the works of Anaxagoras in the orchestra for a drachma<sup>5</sup>. It must have been here, then, if the tradition is true, that dramatic representations were occasionally given in the sixth century. But the ordinary place for such representations would be either in the Lenaeon or in the enclosure of Eleuthereus.

A further piece of information concerning the primitive theatre has been preserved by the grammarians, and deserves

<sup>1</sup> The term *θέατρον Ἀθηναίων* mentioned by Pollux (iv. 121) may refer to the old wooden theatre in the Lenaeon.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Plat. Legg. 817 C.

<sup>4</sup> Phot. v. *ὀρχήστρα* *πρώτων ἐκλήθη*

*ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ*. Timaeus Lex. Plat. v. *ὀρχήστρα* *τόπος ἐπιφανὴς εἰς πανηγυριν, ἐνθα Ἀρμοδίου καὶ Ἀριστογείτονος εἰκόνας*. The statues of Harmodius and Aristogeiton were in the market-place.

<sup>5</sup> Plat. Apol. 26 D.



to be mentioned, though it is apparently not of much value. There was an old proverb in use at Athens, by which a bad seat at any spectacle was called the 'view from the poplar.' The grammarians give the following explanation. They say that at the old dramatic exhibitions the wooden benches for the spectators reached as far as a certain poplar; and that the people who could not get seats on the benches used to scramble up the poplar<sup>1</sup>. Whether the poplar was supposed to be in the Lenaeon or the market-place is uncertain. The whole story has a rather suspicious appearance, and was very likely mere guess-work, invented to account for a current proverbial expression.

Till the end of the sixth century the Athenians were contented with the rough temporary erections just described. But in 499, the year in which Aeschylus made his first appearance, there was an accident at one of their dramatic performances. The wooden benches on which the spectators were sitting collapsed. In consequence of this accident, as Suidas tells us, they resolved to build a more permanent theatre<sup>2</sup>. It was generally supposed, until quite recent times, that the theatre here mentioned was the great stone theatre still in existence. But Dörpfeld has now shown that this building was not begun till the middle of the fourth century, and that there are no traces of a stone theatre at Athens previous to that date. What then was the building to which Suidas refers? The answer to this question has been supplied by a recent discovery of a very interesting kind. On digging down into the earth foundations of the present auditorium it has been ascertained that these foundations consist of two layers. The upper one belongs to the fourth century, as is shown by the fragments of pottery imbedded in it; the lower one is proved by similar evidence to be not later than the fifth<sup>3</sup>. It follows therefore that the Athenians must have built earth embank-

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. ἀπ' αἰγέλου θέα. Hesych. v. αἰγέλου θέα, παρ' αἰγέλου θέα, θέα παρ' αἰγέλου. Eustath. Od. p. 1472.

<sup>2</sup> Suidas v. Πρατίνας . . . συνέβη τὰ ἱκρία, ἐφ' ὧν ἐστήκεσαν οἱ θεαταί, πέσειν,

καὶ ἐκ τούτου θέατρον ᾠκοδομήθη Ἀθηναίοις.

<sup>3</sup> Dörpfeld and Reisch, Griechische Theater, p. 31.

ments for the support of the auditorium as early as the fifth century, and it is doubtless to this work that Suidas alludes. The innovation adopted in 499, in consequence of the accident, was not the erection of a stone theatre, but the substitution of solid earth foundations for the 'ikria' or wooden supports on which the seats had previously rested. The new theatre still resembled the old one, in that the benches and the stage-buildings were made of wood; but greater security and permanence were afforded by the erection of the embankments. The site chosen for this new theatre was the enclosure of Eleuthereus, where the City Dionysia, the most important of the dramatic festivals, was held. From this time forward all theatrical performances were transferred to the same enclosure. The Lenaeon was abandoned as a place of dramatic entertainment. Some critics maintain a contrary opinion, and suppose that the old wooden theatre at the Lenaeon continued to be used for the Lenaeon festival until the erection of the stone theatre in the fourth century<sup>1</sup>. But this view is most improbable. The need for a secure auditorium in place of the previous 'ikria' would be felt just as much at the Lenaea as at the City Dionysia. But there is no trace or record of a permanent theatre at the Lenaeon. The recurrence of the expression 'contests at the Lenaeon' down to the latter part of the fourth century proves nothing<sup>2</sup>. The phrase might easily have been retained, after its local significance was gone, by a kind of survival common in all languages. In just the same way the performances at the City Dionysia were still distinguished from all others as performances 'in the city,' when the reason for the distinction had long since disappeared.

A few faint traces of this theatre of the fifth century are still to be discerned amid the remains of the later building, and will be found indicated in the plan (Fig. 3)<sup>3</sup>. The orchestra was the same as that which had already existed in the sixth

<sup>1</sup> Wilamowitz, *Hermes*, xxi. p. 622.  
*Griech. Theater*, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Aristoph. Acharn.* 504; *Plat. Prot.* 327 D; *Dem. Meid.* § 10 (law of

*Evegorus*); *Corp. Ins. Att.* ii. 741 (334-331 B.C.).

<sup>3</sup> *Griech. Theater*, p. 26 foll.

century. Its position is determined by two fragments of the border, marked *q* and *r*, and by some excavations in the rock at *i*. It lay a few yards to the south-east of the later orchestra. One peculiarity of this orchestra of the sixth and fifth centuries is that, when it was originally constructed, its southern portion stood about six feet above the level of the adjacent ground. It was therefore supported and enclosed on this side by a wall of the same height, to which the fragments *q* and *r* belong. Later on the inequality of level was removed by piling up earth along the border-wall. Probably this alteration was made towards the end of the sixth century, when stage-buildings began to be erected; though it is possible that at first the gap between the orchestra and the stage-buildings was merely covered over with a wooden flooring. A similar instance of an orchestra built on a slope, and ending on one side in a raised terrace, has been found at Thoricus<sup>1</sup>. But in this case, as there were no stage-buildings, the inequality was allowed to remain. Very likely the theatre was not used for dramatic purposes. As regards the auditorium of the fifth century, the earth embankments for the reception of the seats have already been described. Three pieces of ancient masonry, marked *k*, *l*, and *m* in the plan, may perhaps be regarded as parts of the supporting walls which terminated these embankments on each wing. The stage-buildings, being made of wood, have left no trace behind them of any kind. Their probable character will be discussed later on.

It is evident, from the above description, that the theatre of the fifth century was a far less imposing structure than was once supposed. The result of recent excavations has been to largely modify all our previous notions as to the great period of the Athenian drama. In place of the majestic stone theatre, in which it was once thought that the plays of Sophocles and Euripides were produced, we have now to picture to ourselves a simple wooden building, resting on earth foundations, and devoid of all architectural ornament. The difference is no doubt a great one. Still it is not perhaps

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 111.

so great as might appear at first sight. The impressiveness of the old Greek drama, regarded as a spectacle, depended on other considerations than the magnificence of the building in which it was exhibited. When the vast roofless amphitheatre was filled from end to end with the concourse of citizens and strangers, it would make little difference in the significance of the scene whether the benches were of wood or stone. The orchestra of a Greek theatre was always much the same in character, in the grandest as well as in the simplest theatres; and the graceful evolutions of the chorus under the open sky would be equally effective in both. The long scenic background, with its painted decorations, cannot have varied much in appearance, whether it rested on a wall of stone or on a wall of timber. Although therefore the theatre of the great Athenian dramatists was an unpretentious structure, as compared with those which were erected in after times, it is unnecessary to suppose that there was any corresponding inferiority in the outward splendour of the performances.

### § 3. *The Stone Theatre.*

The stone theatre, which we have now to describe, was built about the middle of the fourth century. The reasons for assigning this date to it are as follows<sup>1</sup>. In all the older portions of the building, which belong to the original plan, there is a certain similarity in the style of the workmanship, and in the nature of the materials employed, which points to the fourth century as the date of erection. We have seen too that the upper foundations of the auditorium are proved to be not earlier than the fourth century by the fragments of pottery which they contain. Further than this, various minute pieces of evidence, leading to the same conclusion, have been discovered in different parts of the building. One of the stones used in the western wing of the auditorium bears, as a mason's mark, the letter Omega—a letter which was not introduced into Athens before the year 403 B.C. Another stone in the

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 36 foll.

same wing contains an inscription, and has been built into the wall with the inscription inverted<sup>1</sup>. As the inscription itself is not earlier than the middle or end of the fifth century, the wall for which the stone was employed must obviously belong to a much later period. Again, part of the basis of a statue has been found in the theatre, inscribed with the first half of the name 'Astydamos.' The basis is shown by its shape to have fitted on to the inside corner of the west wing of the auditorium. As it is known that a statue of Astydamos was erected in the theatre about the year 340, it follows that this portion of the auditorium must have been finished at that date<sup>2</sup>. These archaeological indications are confirmed by literary evidence. A decree of the people has been preserved, belonging to the year 330 B.C., in which a vote of thanks is passed to a certain Eudemus of Plataea for lending a thousand yoke of oxen for 'the construction of the Panathenaic race-course and the theatre<sup>3</sup>.' There is also the series of decrees and notices, referring to the finance administration of the orator Lycurgus, and ascribing to him, among other things, the 'completion of the theatre<sup>4</sup>.' Lycurgus was finance minister between 338 and 326, and died about 325. These various lines of evidence, when taken in combination, appear to prove conclusively that the theatre was begun about the year 350, and finished not later than 326<sup>5</sup>.

After the fourth century very few records have been preserved concerning the architectural history of the theatre. In the first century A.D. the stage-buildings were reconstructed. Part of the frieze still remains, with an inscription dedicating the

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. i. 499.

<sup>2</sup> Tragic Drama of the Greeks, p. 430.

<sup>3</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 176.

<sup>4</sup> Plut. X. orat. 841 C καὶ τὸ ἐν Διονύσου θέατρον ἐπιστατῶν ἐτελεύτησε. Ibid. Psephism. iii πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ἡμέτερα παραλαβὼν τοὺς τε νεωσίοικους καὶ τὴν σκευοθήμην καὶ τὸ θέατρον τὸ Διονυσιακὸν ἐξεργάσατο καὶ ἐπετέλεσε. Paus. i. 29. 16 οἰκοδομήματα δὲ ἐπετέλεσε μὲν τὸ θέατρον ἐτέρων ὑπαρχαμένων. Hyperid. apud Apsines, Rhet. Gr. i.

p. 387 (Spengel) ταχθεὶς δὲ ἐπὶ τῇ διοικήσει τῶν χρημάτων εὖρε πόρους, ψυχοδόμησε δὲ τὸ θέατρον, τὸ φεῖδον, τὰ νεώρια, τρήρεις ἐποιήσατο, λιμένας.

<sup>5</sup> Cp. the fact that the comic poets of the fifth century speak of the seats of the spectators as 'benches' (ἱκρία), implying that the theatre was still a wooden one at that time. Aristoph. Thesm. 395 ὥστ' εὐθὺς εἰσιόντες ἀπὸ τῶν ἱκρίων ὑποβλέποντο ἡμᾶς. Cratinus, Frag. Incert. 51 ἱκρίων ψόφῃσις.

work to the emperor Nero<sup>1</sup>. About two centuries later a certain Phaedrus erected a new stage, and commemorated the fact by some verses on one of the steps<sup>2</sup>. At this point all traces of the history of the theatre are lost. During the Middle Ages it disappeared so completely from view, that its very site was forgotten. For a long time modern travellers knew nothing upon the subject. The true site was first pointed out by Chandler in 1765. In 1862 excavations were commenced by the German architect Strack, and continued for three years. The theatre was again exposed to view, and large portions of it were found to have been preserved. Some further discoveries were made in 1877. Lastly, in 1886, 1889, and 1895 new excavations have been carried on under the direction of Dörpfeld, acting for the German Archaeological Institute. The result of these latest investigations has been to clear up many doubtful points in the history of the building, and the arrangement of its various parts.

The new theatre, like the old one, was erected in the enclosure of Dionysus Eleuthereus. This enclosure lay at the foot of the Acropolis, by which it was bounded on the northern side. Its southern boundary may possibly be identical with certain fragments of an old wall, marked *x* in the plan. Within the enclosure were two temples of Dionysus, of which the foundations have recently been discovered. The oldest, marked *t*, was the nearest to the Acropolis, and is assigned by Dörpfeld to the sixth century. It contained the ancient image of Dionysus Eleuthereus which was carried in the annual procession at the City Dionysia. The more recent temple (*u*) lay a few yards to the south of the old one. In it stood a gold and ivory statue of Dionysus made by Alcamenes towards the end of the fifth century. The temple itself was probably of the same date. Near this temple are the remains of a square foundation (*w*), also of the fifth century, which possibly served as the basis for an altar<sup>3</sup>. The site chosen for the new theatre

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iii. 158.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iii. 239 σοὶ τὸδε  
καλὸν ἔτευξε φιλόργιε βῆμα θεήτρου |

Φαῖδρος Ζωίλου βιοδώτορος Ἀτθίδος ἀρχός.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. i. 20. 3; Griech. Theater,  
p. 10 foll.

was almost identical with that of the old one, but lay a few yards further to the north-west. The reasons for this change were apparently twofold. By bringing the auditorium closer to the Acropolis, it was possible to make a more extensive use of the slope of the hill as a support for the tiers of seats. At the same time a larger space was left between the orchestra and the old temple of Dionysus, and so afforded more room for the stage-buildings. In one respect the position of the theatre differed from that usually adopted in later times. The auditorium faced almost directly towards the south. This arrangement was generally avoided by the Greeks, and Vitruvius expressly warns architects against the danger of adopting it, because of the terrible heat caused by the midday sun glaring into the concavity of the theatre<sup>1</sup>. But at Athens there were special reasons on the other side. If the theatre was to be built in the enclosure of Eleuthereus, the only natural position was along the slopes of the Acropolis, and facing towards the south. The rising ground supplied an excellent foundation for the central portion of the auditorium. The choice of any other situation would have involved the erection of costly and elaborate substructures. The Athenians therefore, from motives of economy, preferred the southern aspect, in spite of its obvious disadvantages. The same course was also adopted in the theatres of Eretria and Syracuse.

In proceeding to describe in detail the form and construction of the theatre it will be convenient to take the different portions in succession. A Greek theatre is naturally divided into three parts, the auditorium, the orchestra, and the stage-buildings. In the following description the auditorium will be considered first, the orchestra next. The stage-buildings, as forming the most difficult part of the whole subject, will be reserved for the last.

#### § 4. *The Auditorium.*

Following the arrangement just mentioned, we come first of all to the auditorium. A plan of the existing remains of the

<sup>1</sup> Vitruv. v. 3. 2.

theatre is here inserted (Fig. 3)<sup>1</sup>. Together with the two views of the theatre, which are given in the frontispiece and at the commencement of the present chapter, it will enable the reader to understand the following details without much difficulty. The auditorium, or the portion of the theatre containing the seats for the spectators, was called the 'cavea' in Latin; but there was no technical term for it in Greek. In almost all Greek theatres it was built upon the side of a hill, so that the natural slope of the ground might serve as a foundation for the tiers of seats. At Athens, as we have seen, the rising ground at the foot of the Acropolis was utilized for this purpose, and supported the central part of the building. It was only at the two wings, on the east and west, that artificial substructures were necessary, in order to bring the back seats up to the proper height. The walls by which the auditorium was bounded on the outside have been preserved to a certain extent, and suffice to mark clearly the original shape of the building. On the western side of the theatre, from *a* to *b*, where a strong support was required for the embankment, a device was adopted which is still commonly employed at the present day. If a single wall had been erected, it must have been of enormous width. As a substitute two narrow walls were built in parallel lines, with cross-walls at intervals, and the intervening space was filled up with earth. Thus the same result was obtained at a less expense. Along the north-western curve of the theatre, between *b* and *c*, a single wall proved sufficient, owing to the diminishing size of the embankment. At the point *c* the rock of the Acropolis abutted upon the theatre, and was hollowed out into a regular curve. This is without doubt the portion of the theatre referred to by the ancients as *Katatome*, or 'the Cutting'.<sup>2</sup> In the rock at this place is a natural grotto enlarged

<sup>1</sup> The plan is copied from that given in Griech. Theater, Tafel I.

<sup>2</sup> Harp. v. *κατατομή*. 'Περειδης ἐν τῷ κατὰ Δημοσθένους καὶ καθήμενος κάτω ὑπὸ τῇ κατατομῇ. Φιλόχορος δὲ ἐν ἑκτῇ οὕτως. Αἰσχραῖος Ἀναγνωρίσιος ἀνέθηκε τὸν ὑπὲρ θεάτρου τρίποδα καταγυρώσας,

νευκτικῶς τῷ πρότερον ἔτει χορηγῶν παῖσι, καὶ ἐπέγραψεν ἐπὶ τὴν κατατομὴν τῆς πέτρας. Bekk. Anecd. p. 270. 21 κατατομή ἡ δρχήστρα ἡ νῦν σίγμα, ἡ μέρος τι τοῦ θεάτρου κατεμμήθη, ἐπεὶ ἐν ὄρει κατεσκεύασται.



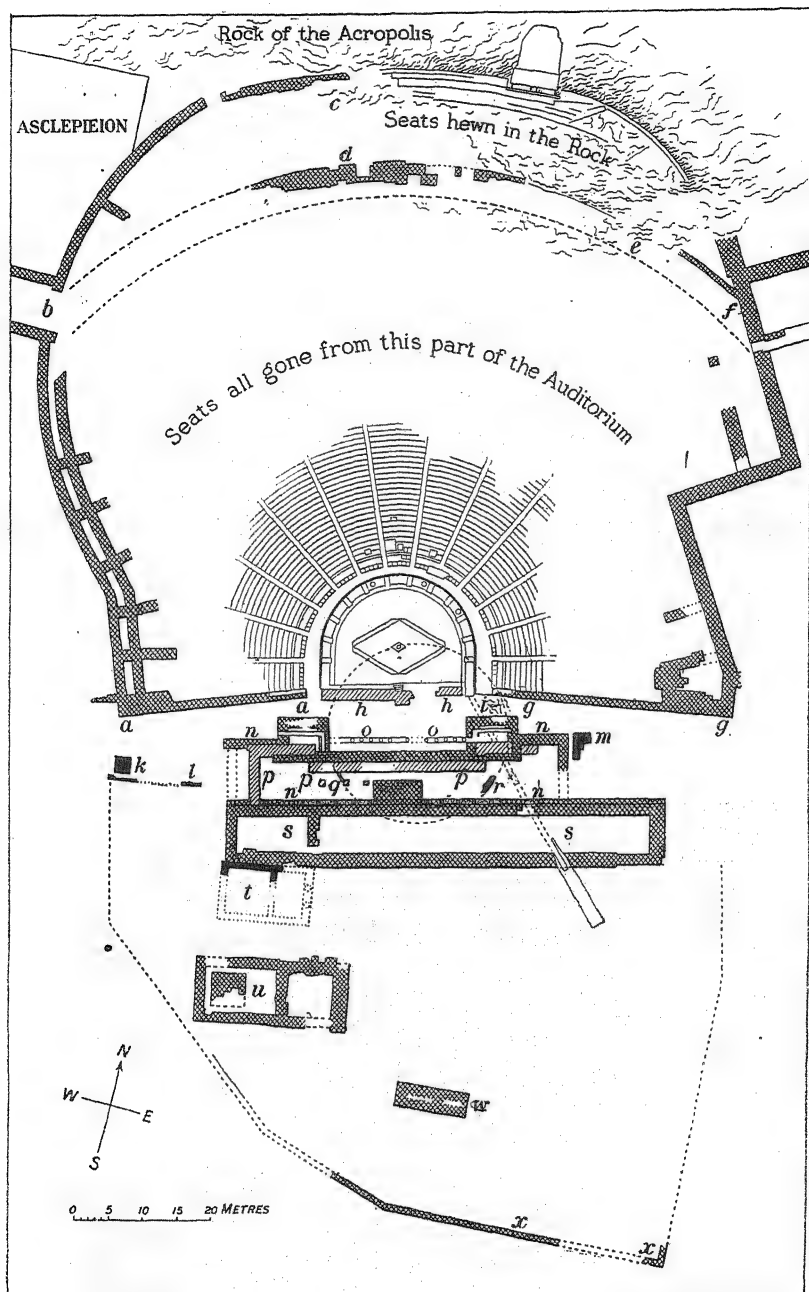


FIG. 3. GROUND-PLAN OF THEATRE AT ATHENS.

by artificial means, and 34 ft. long by 20 ft. broad. Here Thrasyllus erected an elaborate monument to commemorate his victory with a chorus of men in 319 B.C. In front of the grotto stood three columns supporting an entablature, and surmounted by a statue of Dionysus. On the architrave was an inscription recording the victory of Thrasyllus. Inside the grotto were statues of Apollo and Artemis, destroying the children of Niobe. In modern times the grotto has been converted into a chapel of Our Lady. The columns and entablature were in excellent preservation when Stuart visited Athens, but they were shattered by a mine during the Greek revolution. Above the grotto are two columns, which were erected to commemorate victories with dithyrambic choruses. On the capitals can still be seen the holes made to receive the legs of the tripods<sup>1</sup>. After the Katatome the eastern boundary wall, from *f* to *g*, is very peculiar in shape. But the reason of the irregularity has not yet been explained, owing to the scantiness of the remains in this part of the theatre. The two wings of the auditorium are terminated on the south by the walls marked *a-a* and *g-g*. These walls are of unequal length, the eastern wall being about 111 ft., the western only 88 ft. They are not in the same straight line, but if continued inwards would meet in an obtuse angle in the orchestra. This arrangement was the one generally adopted by the Greeks.

The above description, together with the plan, will give a fair idea of the general outline of the auditorium. It will readily be seen that the Athenian theatre had none of that symmetry and harmonious beauty of design which is conspicuous in so many of the later Greek theatres. Its shape was far from regular. If we compare it with the theatre of Epidaurus (Fig. 6), which was built at the end of the fourth century, we shall perceive at once the great inferiority of the Athenian theatre in point of grace and symmetry of outline.

<sup>1</sup> Paus. i. 21. 5; Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 1247; Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens*, ii. 8. For a detailed description of the Thrasyllus monument

see Harrison and Verrall, *Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens*, p. 266 foll.

In most Greek theatres the auditorium was of the same width from one end to the other, and was shaped in a symmetrical curve. In the theatre at Athens the two wings of the auditorium are narrowed so considerably towards the south as to be less than half the depth of the central part. The outside boundary does not run in a regular curve, but is very much flattened where it encounters the rock of the Acropolis, and terminates in a straight line at each of the southern corners. But the strangest point of all is that the eastern wing, at its termination, is several yards wider than the western wing—an arrangement utterly destructive of symmetry of design. The theatre at Athens was built for use rather than for show. It was not, like the theatre at Epidaurus, designed on one harmonious plan. Its shape was determined by the conformation of the ground and by the situation of the adjoining rocks. Hence the irregularity of its outline. Although therefore it is the most interesting of Greek theatres on account of its historical associations, in point of mere beauty it cannot take the highest rank.

We now come to the interior of the auditorium. The boundary between the auditorium and the orchestra is denoted by the dark line in the plan. It will be observed that in the theatre of Dionysus the inside boundary of the auditorium consists of a semicircle with the two ends prolonged in parallel straight lines. This was not the plan usually followed in Greek theatres. In most of the later theatres the two ends of the semicircle were prolonged in the same curve as before, so that the inside boundary of the auditorium formed about two-thirds of a regular circle. The effect of this arrangement was that the spectators sitting at the extremities of the two wings faced towards the centre of the orchestra, and away from the stage. Nor is this surprising. It was previously pointed out that in Greek theatres, where the choral and musical contests greatly outnumbered the dramatic, the orchestra was always the most important part of the whole building. But the arrangement adopted at Athens, of prolonging the two ends of the semicircle in a straight line, had the advantage of giving the spectators in the wings a much better view of the

stage. The same plan was also adopted in the theatre of the Peiraeus, and in the theatres of Assos, Acrae, and Termessos. At Epidaurus and Magnesia a third plan was pursued, differing from both the above. The two ends of the semicircle were prolonged, not in a straight line, nor yet in the same curve as before, but from a new centre, and with a longer radius, so that while they converged to a certain extent, they did not converge so much as in the ordinary Greek theatres. This arrangement, which may be regarded as a compromise between the other two, is perhaps the most beautiful of them all. It is apparently recommended by Vitruvius, though the passage in which he refers to it is extremely ambiguous, and has been interpreted in various other ways<sup>1</sup>.

The interior of the auditorium consisted of a series of stone seats rising tier above tier in a gentle slope from the boundary of the orchestra to the outside extremities of the building. Immediately under the cliff of the Acropolis the seats were carved out of the living rock. With this exception they were made of Peiraic limestone. In some of the upper portions of the theatre they were fixed upon conglomerate foundations. But in most parts they were placed directly upon the bare earth, and were therefore easily capable of being removed. For this reason the greater number of them have disappeared, having been taken away during the Middle Ages for building purposes. All that remain are from twenty to thirty rows in the bottom of the theatre, and portions of a few rows at the top. From these, however, it is possible to obtain a clear conception of the style and arrangement of the auditorium. In order to make the following description more intelligible, an illustration is here inserted, consisting of a restoration of the extremity of the eastern wing (Fig. 4). In this illustration *a* is the orchestra, *b* the eastern entrance into the orchestra, *c* the southern boundary wall of the east wing of the auditorium<sup>2</sup>.

To proceed with the description of the seats. The lowest

<sup>1</sup> See Griech. Theater, p. 169 foll.; Capps, Vitruvius and the Greek Stage, p. 18 foll.

<sup>2</sup> The illustration is copied, with a few alterations, from *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, xiii. p. 197.

step of the auditorium rose about ten inches above the level of the orchestra, and then sloped gently upward towards the front row of seats, where it reached a height of fourteen inches. It was built of large slabs of stone, and formed a sort of passage between the orchestra and the seats. The curve of the seats did not coincide exactly with the curve of the orchestra, but was drawn from a centre rather more to the south, and receded slightly on the two wings. As a consequence the passage was wider at the sides than in the centre, the width at the sides being about eight feet, the width at the centre only four. The

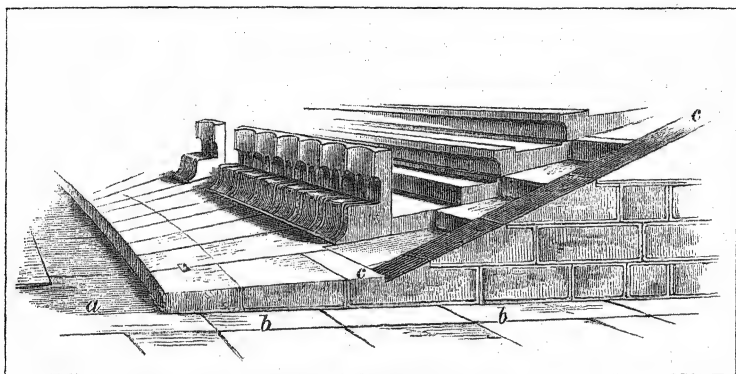


FIG. 4.

same variety of curve is found in the theatre at the Peiraeus; and Dörpfeld supposes that it was adopted in order to give more room at the entrances of the passage, where the press of people would be the greatest<sup>1</sup>. The first row of seats was far superior to the others, and consisted of marble thrones with backs to them. Each throne was about 25 inches wide and 23 inches deep. In the centre was the throne of the priest of Dionysus, slightly larger than the others, and elaborately and beautifully carved. This throne, unlike the rest, was provided with a canopy resting on wooden posts, the holes for which are still visible. Many of the thrones, including that of the chief priest, had receptacles in front of them in which footstools might be placed. The thrones were originally sixty-

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 51.

seven in number, but only sixty of them are now preserved. Fourteen of these were no longer standing in their proper position at the time of the first excavations. Some of them had been designedly removed in Roman times, when certain alterations were made in the front row; others had been accidentally displaced. Most of them have now been restored to their original site. That the thrones belong to the fourth century, and were erected in the time of Lycurgus, appears to be proved by the excellence of the workmanship. Each of them has an inscription in the front, recording the title of the priest or official for whom the seat was reserved. These inscriptions are all of the Hellenistic or Roman period; but behind them are faint traces of older inscriptions, which may possibly go back to the fourth century. The practice of erecting superior seats in the first row for people of distinction was a common one in Greek theatres. At Megalopolis, for example, the front bench was provided with a back, though it was not divided into separate seats, as at Athens. In the theatre of Epidaurus there were three rows of superior workmanship, one at the bottom of the auditorium, and two others half way up the slope, one on each side of the longitudinal passage. But the most peculiar arrangement was that adopted at Oropus and Priene. At Oropus five magnificent thrones were placed inside the ring of the orchestra itself, and well in front of the lowest tier of seats, each throne standing a few yards distant from the other. At Priene a long stone bench with a back was erected in the same position, and in this bench five thrones were inserted at regular intervals<sup>1</sup>.

Immediately behind the line of thrones there was a vacant space about 33 inches wide. Then came what appears to be a small step. But Dörpfeld has shown that this step is merely the back part of an ordinary seat, of which the front portion has been removed. In the original theatre there was a regular tier of seats following closely on the thrones. But in later times the front half of this tier was taken away.

<sup>1</sup> Gardner and Loring, *Excavations at Megalopolis*, p. 74; *Griech. Theater*, pp. 101, 121; Schrader, *Berl. Phil. Wochenschrift*, April 16, 1898, p. 508.

The object of the change, as Dörpfeld thinks, was to open out a wide space for the reception of a row of wooden thrones, which might serve as a supplement to the marble ones<sup>1</sup>. After the step which we have just described began the first of the ordinary tiers of seats, which were continued in exactly the same style from this point up to the top of the building. The shape of the seats is very much the same as in other Greek theatres. Their dimensions are as follows. Each seat was 13 inches high, and was hollowed out slightly in front, so that the person sitting on it might have more freedom for his legs. The surface of the seat was 33 inches across, and was divided into three distinct portions. The first part was for sitting upon, and was 13 inches deep. The second part was 2 inches lower, and was intended to receive the feet of the persons upon the seat above. It was 16 inches across. The third part was merely a narrow edge, of the same level as the first part, and 4 inches deep. The height of the tiers, as we have seen, was 13 inches. If we add to this the 2 inches of the depression in front, it raises the height of the actual seat to 15 inches. A seat of this kind would be rather low for a man of average size. But it was the practice of the Greek spectator to provide himself with a cushion, which would raise the surface to a more comfortable level. The structure of the tiers in the manner described appears to have been due to a desire for economy in the use of space. In a Greek theatre, where an immense number of people had to be accommodated with seats in tolerable proximity to the orchestra and stage, it was necessary to place them as close together as possible. If the surface of each tier had been perfectly flat from front to back, the distance between the successive tiers must have been considerably increased, in order to obtain a height of 15 inches. The depression in the tiers provided the requisite height, while allowing a much smaller interval. Along the front of the rows of seats were two sets of vertical lines engraved in the stone. The lines in the first set were 13 inches apart; the lines in the second,

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 44.

which are rather fainter, were at intervals of 16 inches. Probably the second series of lines was intended to mark off the separate seats. In the first series the intervals are too narrow for this purpose, and can only have served as general measures of distance.

For the purpose of giving access to the different parts of the auditorium a series of passages ran in divergent lines, like the spokes of a wheel, from the orchestra up to the outside boundary. The passages were fourteen in number, and the two upon the extreme south at each side adjoined immediately upon the boundary walls. In theatres of large size, such as those of Epidaurus and Aspendos, it was usual to insert extra passages in the upper part of the auditorium. The manner in which they were arranged will be seen by looking at the plan of the Epidaurus theatre (Fig. 6). At Athens the upper portion of the building has so entirely disappeared that it is impossible to say whether it ever contained additional passages of this kind. But the great size of the theatre makes it probable that such was the case. These vertical passages were always very narrow, in order to save room. At Athens they were only about 27 inches in width, the result being that not more than one person could ascend at a time. The arrangement of the steps along the passages in the Athenian theatre was altogether exceptional, and is only paralleled at the Peiraeus. In all other Greek theatres each tier of seats had two steps corresponding to it in the vertical passages. But at Athens, and also at the Peiraeus, there was only one step for each tier of seats. As the seats were 13 inches high, while the steps were only  $8\frac{1}{2}$ , it was necessary to make up the difference by building the steps with a sloping surface. The surface was furrowed over, to make the ascent more easy. The fourteen passages divided the auditorium into thirteen blocks. Such blocks were called 'cunei' or 'wedges' in Latin, because of their shape. In Greek they were called 'kerkides,' from their resemblance to the 'kerkis,' a tapering rod used in weaving<sup>1</sup>. The front row

<sup>1</sup> Pollux, iv. 123.



in each 'kerkis' contained five marble thrones, with the exception of the two 'kerkides' on the extreme south of each wing, which contained six thrones each; so that the total number of marble thrones was sixty-seven.

In addition to the vertical passages all Greek theatres of any size were also intersected by one or two longitudinal passages, called 'praecinctions' in Latin. These passages divided the auditorium into sections, called 'belts' or 'girdles' in Greek technical terminology<sup>1</sup>. A passage of this kind may still be traced in the upper part of the theatre of Dionysus. Its course is determined by the foundations at *d*, by certain excavations in the rock at *e*, and by the two entrances at *b* and *f*. The great width of the passage—about 15 feet—is explained by the fact that it was also intended to serve as a road. From ancient times there had been a road at the foot of the Acropolis, running from east to west. Traces of this old road have been discovered during the excavations of 1889, and lie about 26 feet below the level of the present auditorium. When its course was intercepted by the erection of the theatre, this passage was constructed on a larger scale than usual, to serve as a substitute. On ordinary occasions, when the theatre was empty, it would be used as a public highway<sup>2</sup>. That it formed a conspicuous object in the midst of the auditorium is shown by a coin in the British Museum (Fig. 5), which contains on one side a rude representation of the theatre at Athens<sup>3</sup>. On this coin, in spite of the roughness of the design, the passage stands out very prominently. Whether there was a second longitudinal passage in the Athenian theatre is uncertain. But the space to the north of the existing passage is so small when compared with the space to the south of it, that it seems reasonable to infer that there was another passage lower down, dividing the under part of the auditorium into two sections. It was the fashion in

<sup>1</sup> διαζώματα, Corp. Ins. Gr. 4283; ζώναι, Malal. p. 222. The longitudinal passages are called διόδοι in the Delian inscription for 269 B.C. The upper belt of seats is called ἐπιθρόνον in the

inscription for 250 B.C. See Bull. Corr. Hell., 1894, p. 162 foll.

<sup>2</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> The copy is taken from Wieseler's Denkmäler des Bühnenwesens, i. 1.

Roman theatres to erect a portico along the top of the auditorium, following the line of the uppermost tier of seats<sup>1</sup>. But there are no traces of such a portico in the theatre at Athens, or in any other theatre of purely Greek origin.

The following facts and measurements will give some idea of the size and capacity of the Athenian theatre. The distance between the inside corners of the auditorium was 72 feet. The distance between the outside corners was 288 feet. In the centre of the auditorium, from north to south, it is calculated that there must have been 78 tiers of seats. Of course on each of the two wings the number of tiers would be considerably less



FIG. 5.

than half that amount. The arrangements throughout were designed with the view of bringing together the largest possible number of people within the smallest possible compass. The vertical passages were little over two feet in width. The seats were constructed in such a manner that the spectators could be packed tightly together, without any space being wasted. As the theatre was in the open air the close crowding of the audience was no doubt much less intolerable than it would have been in a covered building. At the same time the situation of the spectator cannot have been a very comfortable one. He had to remain cramped up in one position, with no back to lean against, and with very little opportunity of moving his limbs. That the Athenians were willing to put up with such

<sup>1</sup> Vitruv. v. 6. 4.

inconveniences for several days in succession is a proof of their enthusiastic devotion to music and the drama. The total number of people who could be accommodated in the theatre at Athens is shown by recent calculations to have been about 17,000<sup>1</sup>. The theatres at Epidaurus and Megalopolis held nearly the same number<sup>2</sup>. Plato, referring to the wooden theatre of his own time, speaks of 'more than thirty thousand spectators<sup>3</sup>.' But this must have been an exaggeration. The old theatre of the fifth century is not likely to have been larger and more capacious than the theatre of Lycurgus.

The auditorium, unlike the rest of the building, was subjected to very little alteration in later times. The parts of it which are still preserved remain in much the same state as in the age of Lycurgus. The various successive changes in the style of the dramatic performances, while they led to corresponding changes in the orchestra and the stage-buildings, had naturally no effect upon the structure of the auditorium. A few innovations were introduced in the Roman period, mostly for the purpose of increasing the comfort of the more distinguished spectators. We have seen that in the old theatre the only person provided with a canopy was the priest of Dionysus. The same luxury was now extended to all the people in the front benches. An awning was erected on wooden posts to protect them from the sun. Three lines of holes for the reception of the posts may still be traced in the stone-work, one in front of the thrones, one behind, and one in the second row of ordinary seats. It seems that about this date there was an increase in the number of people for whom seats of honour were required. The front row of the ordinary benches was removed, in the

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 45. Dörpfeld obtains this result by allowing for each person a space of 16 inches—the distance between the vertical lines already mentioned (p. 126). Sixteen inches would be very narrow for the purpose. If 19 inches is allowed, he calculates that the theatre would have held about 14,000 people.

<sup>2</sup> Megalopolis held about 17,000

(Gardner), or 18,700 (Schultz); Epidaurus about 17,000 (Gardner). These calculations however should be slightly reduced, as they are based on an allowance of only 13 inches for each person (see above, p. 125), which is certainly too small. See Excavations at Megalopolis, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup> Plat. Symp. 175 E.

way already described, to supply the necessary space. Single marble thrones were also set up here and there in the rows further back. Another change, which involved some disfigurement of the building, was made about the same time. A large stone basis, approached by steps, was erected in front of the sixth vertical passage, thus closing the approach to that passage, and also necessitating the removal of four of the marble thrones, which were placed elsewhere. The basis was probably intended as a sort of royal box, and held a special throne reserved for people of imperial rank. A similar basis was also erected, probably for the same purpose, behind the seat of the priest of Dionysus.

### § 5. *The Orchestra.*

After the auditorium the next great division of the theatre is the orchestra. This was the name given to the flat surface enclosed between the stage-buildings and the inside boundary of the auditorium. It was called the orchestra, or 'dancing-place,' because in Greek theatres it was reserved for the performances of the chorus<sup>1</sup>. In later times it was also called the Sigma, because its shape resembled the semicircular figure which was adopted in the fourth century as the symbol of the letter sigma<sup>2</sup>. In one place the word 'konistra' is employed to denote the orchestra<sup>3</sup>. Konistra means properly the arena of a wrestling-school. It would hardly be applicable as a term for the early Greek orchestras, which were used for music and dancing, but not for gymnastic contests. Probably therefore this meaning of the word was of late origin, and first arose in the Roman period, when Greek theatres occasionally became the scene of gladiatorial contests. Among the Romans the orchestra was given up to the spectators, and the performances of singers and dancers took place upon the stage. Hence the later Greek commentators and grammarians often used the word

<sup>1</sup> Phot. v. ὀρχήστρα . . . τοῦ θεάτρου  
τὸ κάτω ἡμικύκλιον, οὗ καὶ οἱ χοροὶ ἦδον  
καὶ ὀρχοῦντο.

<sup>2</sup> Bekk. Anecd. p. 270. 21 ἡ ὀρχήστρα  
ἡ νῦν σίγμα λεγόμενη. Ibid. p. 286. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Suidas v. σικνή . . . ἡ κονίστρα,  
τούτῃστι τὸ κάτω ἔδαφος τοῦ θεάτρου.  
The same scholium is repeated in Schol.  
Gregor. Nazianz. laud. patr. 355 B.

'orchestra' improperly to denote the stage, which in Roman theatres had now become the actual dancing-place. This later signification of the term has given rise to much confusion. When a Greek scholiast speaks of the orchestra, it is necessary to look carefully to the context, to see whether he means the stage, or the orchestra in its proper sense<sup>1</sup>.

The orchestra in the Athenian theatre is mostly of very late date, and contains but few traces of the original structure. Our knowledge of the early Greek orchestra has to be derived from other sources. Before proceeding to discuss this part of the subject, it will be convenient in the first place to give a brief description of the existing remains in the theatre at Athens. The only portion of the old orchestra of Lycurgus which has been preserved is the gutter. This gutter, which was intended to drain off the water from the tiers of seats, ran immediately inside the border-line of the auditorium. It was made of limestone, and was about a yard in width. At the western corner it was 31 inches deep, but increased in depth all the way round to the eastern corner, where the depth was 43 inches. Here it made a sudden drop of about a yard, and then ran off in a south-easterly direction underneath the stage-buildings. It had no covering, except opposite the vertical passages, where it was bridged over with slabs of limestone. Apart from this gutter the greater part of the present orchestra belongs to the time of Nero. At this date considerable changes were made. The stage was probably pushed forward as far as the two corners of the auditorium. The orchestra, having been thus largely reduced in size, was covered over with the marble pavement which still remains. This pavement consists for the most part of rectangular slabs, placed in lines parallel to the stage. But in the centre there is a large rhombus-shaped figure, bordered with two strips, and paved with small slabs also of a rhombus shape. In the middle of the figure is a block

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Schol. Aristoph. Equit. 505 (of the chorus) ἐστᾶσι μὲν γὰρ κατὰ στοίχον οἱ πρὸς τὴν ὀρχήστραν ἀποβλέποντες· ὅταν δὲ παραβῶσιν, ἐφεξῆς ἐστῶτες καὶ πρὸς τοὺς θεατὰς βλέποντες

τὸν λόγον ποιοῦνται. Here ὀρχήστρα obviously = λογεῖον. Cp. Suidas v. σκηνή; Isidor. Orig. xviii. 44 'orchestra autem pulpitum erat scaenae.'

containing a small circular depression, which was probably intended to receive an altar of Dionysus. At the time when the pavement was constructed, the gutter was also covered over entirely with slabs of marble, with rosette-shaped openings at intervals. Some of these openings have been preserved, and are indicated in the plan. At the same time a marble balustrade was erected in front of the first step of the auditorium. It is marked by the dark line in the plan. Most of it is still standing, and consists of marble slabs bound together by iron clamps, and 43 inches high. The purpose of the balustrade must have been to serve as a protection to the spectators in the front rows, when the orchestra was given up to gladiatorial combats or similar exhibitions. After these innovations of the Neronian period the orchestra seems to have been untouched until about the end of the third century A.D., when Phaedrus erected his new stage. It was then made water-tight, for the purpose of holding mimic sea-fights in it. The gutter was filled up, and the rosette-shaped openings closed. Traces of the pipes used for letting on and letting off the water for the sea-fight have been discovered in various parts of the building.

In the course of recent excavations underneath the orchestra two discoveries have been made. It appears that at some unknown period certain tunnels of irregular shape, and too small to serve as passages, were bored through the rock, but filled up again as soon as made. Also, just in front of the Roman stage, the rock was cut away in a straight line, and the cutting was continued as far as the stage-buildings, the interval being filled up with earth. The purpose of both these works is quite uncertain<sup>1</sup>.

It will be seen, from the above description, that the remains of the Athenian theatre throw very little light upon the character of the ancient orchestra. Fortunately, during the last ten or fifteen years, a large number of other theatres have been excavated, which suffered less from reconstruction, and in which the orchestras have been left more or less in their original condition. The finest and best preserved of these is the theatre

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, pp. 57, 58.

of Epidaurus, which was built at the end of the fourth century<sup>1</sup>. It is described by Pausanias as the most beautiful theatre in the world<sup>2</sup>. A plan of the building (Fig. 6) is here inserted, together with a view taken from the north-east (Fig. 7)<sup>3</sup>. The evidence derived from this and other theatres will enable us to clear up many questions in connexion with the orchestra, to which the Athenian theatre supplies no answer.

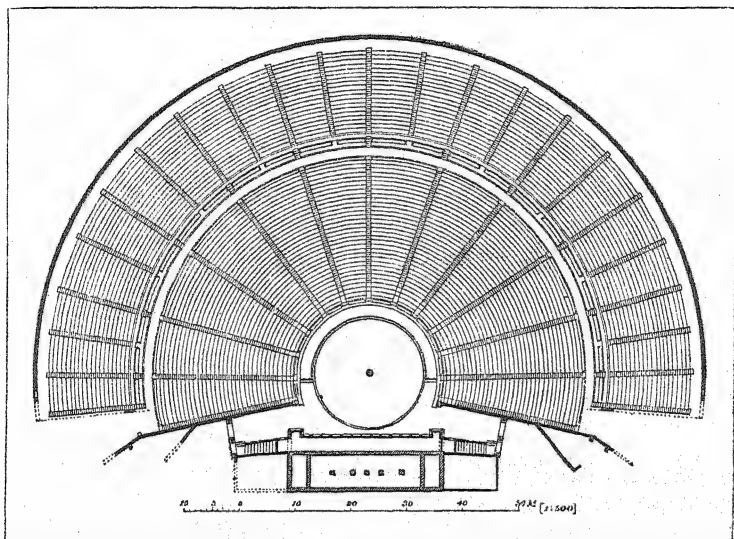


FIG. 6.

In the early Greek theatres, as already pointed out, the orchestra was the most important part. The stage-buildings were a mere appendage. The seats of the spectators were so arranged, that while every one had an excellent view of the

<sup>1</sup> For the date see Griech. Theater, p. 129 ff.; Christ, Sitzungs. bayer. Akad. der Wissen. 1894, p. 30 ff.; Lechat, Épidaure, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Paus. ii. 27. 5 Ἐπίδουριος δὲ ἐστὶ θέατρον ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, μάλιστα ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν θέας ἄξιον· τὰ μὲν γὰρ Ῥωμαίων πολὺ δὴ τι ὑπερῆρκε τῶν πανταχοῦ τῷ κόσμῳ, μεγέθει δὲ Ἀρκάδων τὸ ἐν Μεγάλῃ πόλει.

ἁρμονίας δὲ ἡ κάλλους ἕνεκα ἀρχιτέκτων ποῖος ἐς ἄμειλλαν Πολυκλείτῳ γένοιτ' ἂν ἀξιόχρεως; Πολύκλειτος γὰρ τὸ θέατρον τοῦτο καὶ οἶκημα τὸ περιφερὲς ὁποίησας ἦν.

<sup>3</sup> The view is copied from a photograph taken by Prof. Ernest Gardner, and kindly lent for reproduction. The plan is from Baumeister's Denkmäler, iii. p. 1735.

orchestra, the view of the stage was in many cases a very poor one. When the Romans gave up the orchestra to the spectators, and transferred all the performances to the stage, they made various alterations in the arrangement and proportions of the theatre. They largely diminished the size of the orchestra, by bringing the stage several yards forward; and at the same time they cut off considerable portions from the two ends of the auditorium. In this way they were enabled to make the stage much deeper, so as to accommodate a larger number of performers. By shortening the wings of the auditorium they abolished those seats which looked away from the stage. Vitruvius gives some interesting directions for determining the proper proportions of a Greek and Roman theatre<sup>1</sup>. According to his figures the orchestra in a Roman theatre constituted an exact semicircle. The front line of the stage coincided precisely with the diameter of the orchestra. In a Greek theatre the stage was placed much further back. The distance between the central point of the front line of the stage and the central point in the opposite circumference of the orchestra was six-sevenths of the diameter of the orchestra. In a Greek theatre therefore, according to this statement, if the circumference of the orchestra was prolonged so as to form a complete circle, it would be found that the front line of the stage only intersected a very small portion of that circle. None of the existing theatres coincide exactly with the rules laid down by Vitruvius. Sometimes the stage stands further back than he directs, as at the Peiræeus. Sometimes it reaches further forward, as at Megalopolis. But in most cases the deviation is very slight, and his description, taken as a general statement, may be regarded as approximately true. The fact is instructive. The largeness of the space allotted to the orchestra by the arrangement above described enables us to realise very clearly the subordinate position of the stage in Greek theatres.

Vitruvius in the above account uses the word 'orchestra' in its ordinary sense, to denote the whole space included within the border-line of the auditorium. But we may limit the mean-

<sup>1</sup> Vitruv. v. 6 and 7.



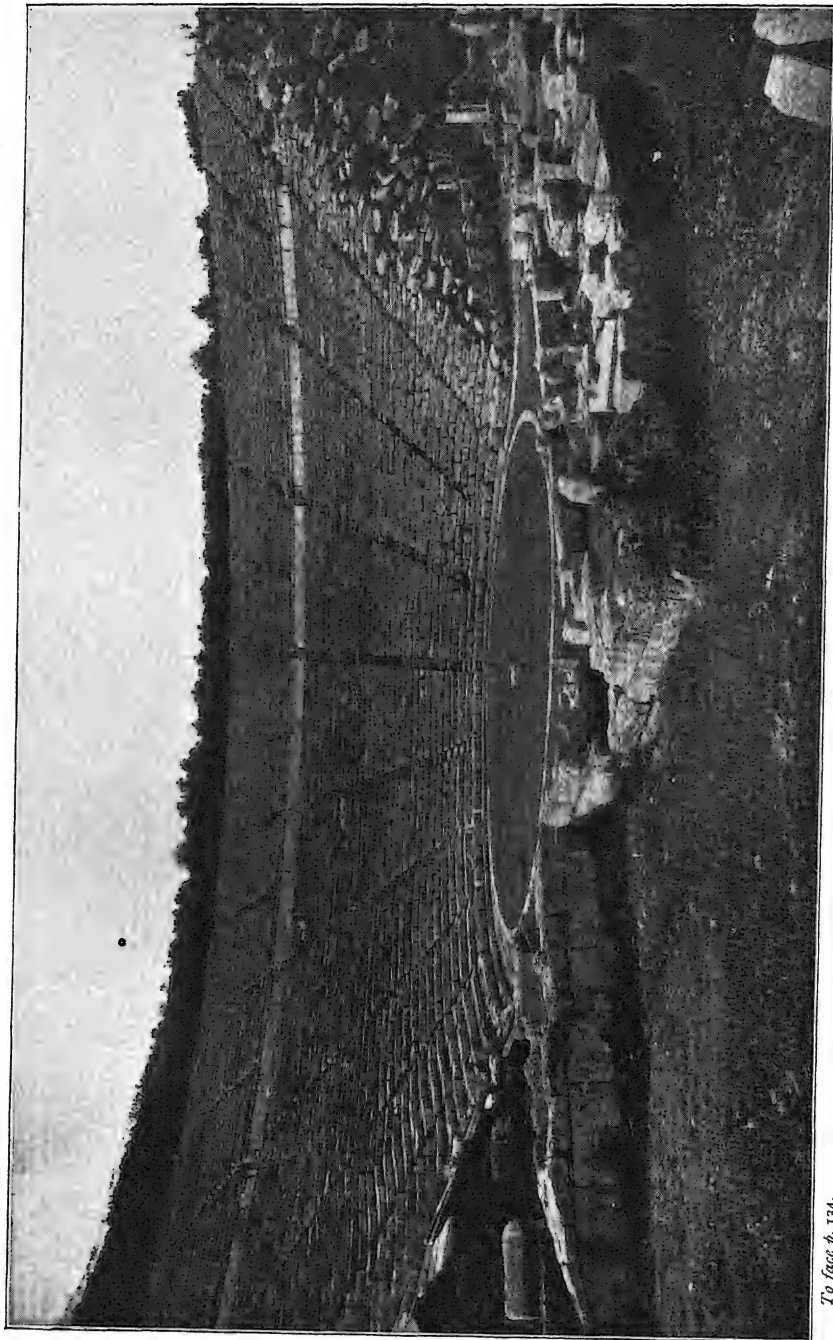


FIG. 7. THEATRE AT EPIDAUROS, FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



ing of the word, and confine it to the actual dancing-place, excluding the gutter which usually ran inside the auditorium. If this is done, it will be found that in many Greek theatres the circumference of the orchestra, when prolonged, forms a complete circle, without touching the stage. The theatre of Epidaurus (Fig. 6) offers a good example<sup>1</sup>. The dancing-place is here surrounded with a circular kerbstone, fifteen inches wide, which only reaches within a yard of the stage-buildings. It has been contended that all Greek theatres were constructed on this principle; that the stage was pushed back sufficiently far to allow the orchestra, in its narrower sense, to form a complete circle. The line of the orchestra might be marked out in stone, or it might not; but there was always room for it<sup>2</sup>. This however is an exaggeration. There are many Greek theatres, such as those of Delos, Assos, and Sicyon, in which the circle of the actual dancing-place could not be completed without encroaching upon the stage<sup>3</sup>. At Megalopolis (Fig. 11), if such a circle was completed, about a third of it would be intersected. Here the orchestra was unusually large, and the stage was therefore brought further forward, in order to be within tolerable proximity to the auditorium. These examples show that the Greeks had no pedantic feeling on the subject of the orchestra circle. No doubt in ancient times, before the development of the drama, their orchestras formed complete circles; and possibly they were enclosed all round with a kerbstone. The old orchestra at Athens seems to have been so encircled. But when regular theatres with stage-buildings began to be erected, the architects appear to have discarded the stone border, and with it the imaginary circle, and to have contented themselves with allowing a sufficient space for the chorus, according to the requirements of each particular theatre. In many cases, as it happened, they left room enough for a full circle. At Epidaurus such a circle was actually

<sup>1</sup> Other examples are found at Athens, the Peiræus, and Eretria. See Fig. 3, and the plans in *Griech. Theater*, pp. 98 and 112.

<sup>2</sup> *Griech. Theater*, p. 175.

<sup>3</sup> See the plans in *Griech. Theater*, pp. 117, 144, 149.

marked out in stone. But this is the only known example; and there are several theatres in which the stage was so placed as to make a complete circle impossible.

At Athens, as we have seen, there was an interval of several feet between the front row of benches and the circuit of the orchestra. The interval was filled by a broad sloping step, which served as a passage to the auditorium. A similar passage is found at the Peiraeus. But in most Greek theatres there was no passage of this kind, and the line of seats bordered immediately on the orchestra and the gutter by which it was encircled. The gutter was a regular feature in Greek orchestras, and was constructed in various styles. The Athenian type, with its broad and deep channel, and bridges at intervals, seems to have been exceptional and antique, and is not found elsewhere except at Sicyon and the Peiraeus. In some places, such as Megalopolis, the gutter was much narrower, so as to need no bridges. At Epidaurus and Eretria, on the other hand, it was very broad and very shallow, and might be used as a passage to the auditorium in dry weather. The gutter at Epidaurus is no less than seven feet across, and only eight inches deep. The surface of the orchestra was in most cases, as at Athens, a few inches below the level of the front row of seats. It used often to be asserted that the surface was boarded over with planks. But this is an error, due to the fact that the Greek grammarians often use the word 'orchestra' to denote the stage<sup>1</sup>. The evidence of the theatres lately excavated shows that in almost every case the Greek orchestra consisted simply of earth beaten down hard and flat. It is true that the orchestra at Eretria was paved with slabs of limestone, and that at Delos, which lay on the rock, was covered with a 'coating' of some kind or another<sup>2</sup>. But in all other instances, as far as we know, the surface was merely of earth. Marble pavements are never found in Greek theatres, except when they had been built or recon-

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. σκηνή . . . μετὰ τὴν σκηνὴν εὐθὺς καὶ τὰ παρασκήνια ἢ ὀρχήστρα. αὕτη δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ τόπος ὃ ἐκ σανίδων ἔχων τὸ ἰδαφος, ἀφ' οὗ οἱ θεατρί- ζουσιν οἱ μύμοι. Here the word ὀρχήστρα

clearly = λογεῖον.

<sup>2</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 116. Bulletin de Corr. Hell. 1894, p. 163 τὴν ὀρχήστραν τοῦ θεάτρου καταχρῖσθαι (date 269 B.C.).

structed in the Roman fashion. Lines were sometimes marked on the floor of the orchestra, to assist the chorus in their evolutions<sup>1</sup>. Similar lines are used on the modern stage when complicated ballets are produced. Aristotle mentions cases of orchestras being strewed with chaff, and remarks that when this was done the choruses were not heard so well. But it is uncertain to what theatres or to what occasions he is referring<sup>2</sup>.

In every Greek orchestra there was an altar of Dionysus. The fact is proved by the express testimony of ancient writers, and also by the circumstance that the dramatic performances were preceded by a sacrifice<sup>3</sup>. However, there is only one theatre, that of Priene, in which any remains of an altar have been discovered. In this theatre, which was excavated for the first time a year or two ago, the altar is still found standing in its original position. It is placed just in front of the first row of seats, and exactly opposite the centre of the stage<sup>4</sup>. Whether this was the usual position of the altar in a Greek theatre seems doubtful. In the earliest period, when the drama was still a purely lyrical performance, the altar stood in the centre of the orchestra, and the chorus danced round about it. The evidence supplied by the remains at Athens and Epidaurus rather favours the view that in these theatres it still occupied the same position. In the middle of the theatre at Epidaurus there is a round stone, 28 inches in diameter, let into the ground, so as to be on the same level with the surrounding surface. In the middle of the stone is a circular hole. A similar hole, as we have seen, is found in the later Athenian orchestra. The only plausible explanation of these holes is that they were intended for the reception of small stone altars. It is probable therefore that the practice varied in regard to the situation of the altar. In some theatres, such as those of

<sup>1</sup> Hesych. v. γραμμαί.

<sup>2</sup> Aristot. Prob. xi. 25 διὰ τί, ὅταν ἀχυρωθῶσιν αἱ ὀρχήστραι, ἦττον οἱ χοροὶ γεγῶνασιν;

<sup>3</sup> Suidas v. σκηνή . . . εἶτα μετὰ τὴν ὀρχήστραν (i.e. the stage) βωμὸς τοῦ

Διονύσου. Poll. iv. 123 ἡ δὲ ὀρχήστρα τοῦ χοροῦ, ἐν ᾗ καὶ ἡ θυμέλη, εἶτε βῆμά τι οὖσα εἶτε βωμός. For the sacrifices in the theatre see on p. 92.

<sup>4</sup> Schrader, Berl. Philolog. Wochenschrift, 1898, April 16, p. 509.

Athens and Epidaurus, it may have been placed in the middle of the orchestra, after the ancient fashion. In others, such as that of Priene, it may have been drawn further back towards the auditorium, so as to leave a clear space for the evolutions of the chorus. The altar of the theatre was called the Thymele, because of the sacrifices offered upon it. It is called by this name in a fragment of Pratinas<sup>1</sup>. In later times the use of the word was extended, so as to denote, not only the altar, but also the space round about it; and 'thymele' became a regular name for an orchestra<sup>2</sup>. Later still, when the Romans substituted the stage for the orchestra, the word 'thymele,' having become identical in meaning with the word 'orchestra,' was employed in similar fashion to signify the 'stage'<sup>3</sup>.

In one or two Greek theatres subterranean passages have been discovered, leading from the stage-buildings to the middle of the orchestra. These passages are generally rather more than six feet in height, and from two to three feet wide. There is one in the theatre of Eretria, with a flight of steps leading down to it at each end<sup>4</sup>. Another has been found at Magnesia; but as only a small portion of it still remains, it is impossible to say where it began and where it ended, or whether it had any exit into the orchestra<sup>5</sup>. The passage at Sicyon is rather peculiar. A small drain runs underground from the auditorium to the centre of the orchestra, where it falls into a square tank. From the tank onwards there is a regular vaulted passage, which is continued as far as the back of the stage-buildings, and finally ends in a tunnel in the rock. Where it passes under the stage, a flight of steps leads down to it; but no traces of an entrance from the orchestra can be detected<sup>6</sup>. These

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. σκηνή . . . μετὰ τὴν ὀρχήστραν βωμὸς τοῦ Διονύσου, ὃς καλεῖται θυμέλη παρὰ τὸ θύειν. Etym. Mag. v. θυμέλη. Pratinas apud Athen. 517 B τίς ὕβρις ἔμολεν ἐπὶ Διονυσιάδα πολυπάταγα θυμέλαν;

<sup>2</sup> Phrynichus p. 163 (Lob.) θυμέλην τοῦτο οἱ μὲν ἀρχαῖοι ἀντὶ τοῦ θυσιᾶν ἐτίθουν, οἱ δὲ νῦν ἐπὶ τοῦ τόπου ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ, ἐν ᾧ αὐληταὶ καὶ κιθαριῶδοι καὶ ἄλλοι τινὲς ἀγωνίζονται· σὺ μὲντοι ἔνθα

μὲν κωμῳδοὶ καὶ τραγῳδοὶ ἀγωνίζονται λογεῖον ἔρεῖς, ἔνθα δὲ οἱ αὐληταὶ καὶ οἱ χοροὶ ὀρχήστραν, μὴ λέγε δὲ θυμέλην.

<sup>3</sup> Bekk. Anecd. p. 292 σκηνή δ' ἐστὶν ἡ νῦν λεγόμενη θυμέλη. Schol. Arist. Equit. 149 ὥς ἐν θυμέλῃ δὲ τὸ ἀνάβαινε.

<sup>4</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 116.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 156.

<sup>6</sup> American Journal of Archaeology, 1891, p. 281; 1893, p. 404.

three passages, when first discovered, were thought to have some connexion with the dramatic performances; and it was supposed that they might be used to enable ghosts to appear suddenly in the middle of the orchestra. But this theory seems to be untenable, for the following reasons. In the first place, no traces of such passages have been found at Athens, and Epidaurus, and other theatres where excavations have been carried on. But if they had been a regular contrivance in dramatic exhibitions, it is impossible to suppose that the Athenians would not have made use of them. Secondly, the passage at Sicyon not only reaches as far as the stage, but also runs right on to the back of the stage-buildings, where it would have been of no use for the purpose suggested. Thirdly, there is no decisive evidence that the passages at Sicyon and Magnesia opened out into the orchestra. Fourthly, similar passages of Roman workmanship have been discovered at Tralles and at Magnesia, the passage in the latter place having been substituted for the previous Greek one. But these Roman passages had no exit into the orchestra, as the remains clearly show. After running from the stage-buildings to the middle of the orchestra, they branched off to right and left like the letter T, and then stopped<sup>1</sup>. The fact then that the Romans built tunnels of this kind, which had no connexion with performances in the orchestra, is a strong reason for assuming that the Greeks might do the same. What the purpose of the tunnels was, whether Greek or Roman, has not yet been explained, and remains very mysterious.

In all Greek theatres the front of the stage-buildings was separated from the wings of the auditorium by a vacant space several feet in width. Two open passages, one on the right and one on the left, led into the orchestra. The passages were closed on the outside by large gates, and these gates formed the only architectural connexion between the auditorium and the stage-buildings<sup>2</sup>. In some theatres, such as those

<sup>1</sup> Athen. Mittheil, 1893, p. 407;  
Griech. Theater, p. 157.

found at Sicyon, Delos, and Pergamon.  
See the plans in Griech. Theater, pp.

<sup>2</sup> Remains of such gateways are to be

117, 144, 151.

of Epidaurus and Assos, the gates which led into the orchestra stood side by side with other gates leading into the stage-buildings<sup>1</sup>. Sufficient remains of the gates at Epidaurus have been preserved to admit of a complete restoration of them. The present illustration represents the two gates on the western side of the theatre. The gate to the right leads

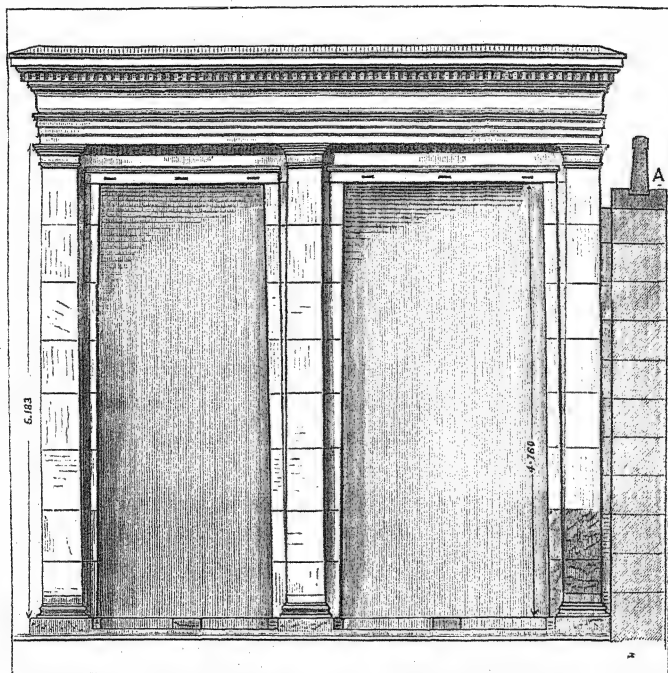


FIG. 8.

into the orchestra; that to the left leads into the stage-buildings<sup>2</sup>. In the Athenian theatre, owing to the defective character of the remains in this part, it is impossible to determine whether there were two gates on each side or only one. The passages at Athens measured nine feet across on the outside. But they grew gradually wider, as one approached the orchestra, because of the oblique position of

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, pp. 129, 150.

<sup>2</sup> The illustration is taken from Πρακτικά τῆς ἐν Ἀθῇν. ἀρχαιολ. ἐταιρίας for 1883.



the boundary walls of the auditorium. These orchestral passages answered a double purpose. In the first place, they formed the principal entrance to the theatre for the general public. In many theatres they were the only entrances. In Athens there were two others at the upper end of the auditorium; but the main approaches in all theatres were those between the auditorium and the stage-buildings. The spectators came in by the orchestra, and then ascended the vertical passages to their proper seats. In the second place, it was by these passages that the chorus entered the orchestra at the commencement of each play. The technical name for the passages was 'parodoi' or 'eisodoi'.<sup>1</sup> In Roman theatres they were of course done away with, as the Roman stage was brought much more forward than the Greek, and the two ends coalesced with the wings of the auditorium. In place of the old open passages the Romans built vaulted entrances underneath the auditorium, and parallel with the stage. Later Greek writers, misled by the analogy of the Roman theatres, sometimes apply the terms 'vault' and 'archway' to the open side-entrances of the Greek theatre. But such language is inaccurate<sup>2</sup>.

### § 6. Ruins of the Stage-buildings at Athens.

The third and last division of the theatre consists of the stage-buildings, the 'skene,' as they were called. This word has a curious history in connexion with the drama. Originally it meant the booth or tent in which the single actor of the Thespian period used to change his costume. Then as this booth gradually developed into a large and elaborate structure, the word 'skene' extended its meaning at the same time, and came to be the regular term for the stage-buildings of a theatre<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Πάροδοι in Schol. Arist. Equit. 149; Poll. iv. 126; εἰσοδοί in Arist. Nub. 326, Av. 296. The word παράδοδος was also used to denote the entrances on to the stage, e.g. in Plut. Demetr. 905 B; Poll. iv. 128; Athen. 622 D.

<sup>2</sup> Vitruv. v. 6. The side-entrances are called ψαλῆς in Poll. iv. 123; ἀψῆς in Vit. Aristoph. (Dindf. Prolegom. de Comoed. p. 36.)

<sup>3</sup> E.g. τῆς σκηνῆς τὸ τέγος καταλείψαντι . . . εἰς τὸ λογεῖον τῆς σκηνῆς

Later on it began to be applied not only to the whole of the buildings, but also to the more important parts of them. It was used to denote the stage or platform on which the actors performed<sup>1</sup>; and also the back-scene, with its painted decoration, in front of which they stood<sup>2</sup>. Eventually it was employed as a general term for the scene of action, or for the portions or scenes into which a play was divided<sup>3</sup>. These last three meanings of the word are still retained in its English derivative.

The question as to the structure of the stage-buildings in a Greek theatre is one of the greatest interest, because of its intimate connexion with many disputed points of dramatic history. Unfortunately, it is a subject upon which the information supplied by the existing ruins is very defective. In all the remaining theatres of purely Greek origin little has been left of the stage-buildings beyond the mere foundations, and it is impossible from such evidence to go very far in the process of conjectural reconstruction. Our knowledge of the upper part of the building has to be derived mainly from casual notices in the old grammarians. In treating this question it will be best to follow the same arrangement as in the case of the orchestra, and to begin by giving a short account of the ruins in the theatre of Dionysus at Athens. The stage-buildings at Athens were very frequently altered and reconstructed in the course of their history, and the task of distinguishing between the confused remains of the different periods has been by no means an easy one. The recent investigations of Dörpfeld have for the first time placed the matter in a fairly clear light. The results of his discoveries are indicated in the plan of the theatre already given.

The oldest stage-buildings, which were erected soon after

(Delian inscription, 279 B. C., in Bull. Corr. Hell. 1894, p. 162 foll.).

<sup>1</sup> E. g. Aristot. Poet. c. 24 τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν μέρος. Polyb. xxx. 13 πυκταὶ τέσσαρες ἀνέβησαν ἐπὶ τὴν σκηνήν.

<sup>2</sup> Plut. Demetr. 900 D ἔλεγε νῦν πρῶτον ἐωρακέναι πόρνην προερχομένην ἐκ τραγικῆς σκηνῆς. So ἡ σκηνὴ ἡ μέση, τὰς

ἐπάνω σκηνὰς καὶ νὰς ποιῆσαι, γράφαι τὰς σκηνὰς, κ.τ.λ. (Delian inscription, 274 B. C., in Bull. Corr. Hell. l. c.). Hence σκηνογραφία = scene-painting (Aristot. Poet. c. 4).

<sup>3</sup> Arg. Aesch. Pers. καὶ ἔστιν ἡ μὲν σκηνὴ τοῦ δράματος περὶ τῷ τάφῳ Δαρείου. Bekk. Anecd. iii. p. 1461 εἰς πέντε σκηνὰς διαιρεῖ τὸ δράμα.

the middle of the fourth century, are marked by cross-shading in the plan, and denoted by the letter *n*. They consisted, as will be seen, of a long and narrow rectangular structure. In the front, towards each end, were two projecting side-wings. The length of the building was 152 feet, and its depth, measured between the wings, 21 feet. The wings themselves were 25 feet wide, and projected about 17 feet on the inside. The roof of the building was originally supported by a line of columns running along the centre, of which some traces still remain. At the back of the building there was a low narrow wall, running immediately in front of the supporting wall, and fitted with square holes at regular intervals. The purpose of the wall is very obscure; but Dörpfeld conjectures that the upper story was of wood, and not of stone, and that it rested on wooden beams which were placed in these holes. As regards the appearance of the building in the front nothing can be ascertained with certainty. The space between the side-wings evidently contained the stage, but no traces of it are to be found. It must therefore have been a temporary erection of wood. Dörpfeld supposes that the front of the two side-wings, and the front of the wall between them, were decorated with columns and entablatures about thirteen feet high<sup>1</sup>. But the evidence for this opinion is far from conclusive. It is founded on the fact that the stylobates used in the later side-wings were not originally designed for that position, but had obviously been used somewhere else before. Dörpfeld supposes, perhaps correctly, that they stood at first in front of the Lycurgean side-wings. But this is no justification for assuming that the wall between the wings in the Lycurgean building was also decorated in the same way. The stylobate used for this part of the later building was a new one, and not an old one rearranged; and this fact seems to show that there was no such stylobate in the building of Lycurgus. Otherwise there would have been just as much reason for using it, as for using the two stylobates from the wings. On the whole then it is clear that we know very little about

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 62 foll.

the old stage-building of the fourth century beyond the shape of its ground-plan. As to its height, the material used in its upper stories, and the manner in which its front was embellished, there is no certain evidence.

The history of the stage-buildings during the next two hundred years or so is a blank. Nothing can be ascertained on this subject from the ruins. The first great alteration of which traces remain was carried out in the course of the first or second century B.C. A permanent stone proscenium was then erected in the space between the wings. It is marked *o* in the plan. The front of this proscenium consisted of a row of columns supporting an entablature. Its height, as may be calculated from the traces of the columns, was about 13 feet; its depth between 9 and 10 feet. It was covered on the top with a wooden platform, resting on beams, the holes for which are still visible in fragments of the architrave. In the centre of the front part of the proscenium was a door leading out into the orchestra. This door varied in width at different periods from  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet, but there is nothing to show which was the earlier and which the later of the two widths. Traces of a smaller door, to the west of the central one, have also been discovered; but there are no traces of a door to the east. As this new stage was only about ten feet deep, smaller side-wings were required. The old wings of the Lycurgean theatre were therefore thrown back about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet, thus adding several feet to the width of the 'parodoi.' Beyond the construction of the stone proscenium no further remains of new erections belonging to this period have been discovered; but it is probable that the upper part of the building was considerably altered at the same time.

The second great reconstruction of the stage-buildings took place in the reign of Nero, after a lapse of perhaps two hundred years. The whole of this part of the theatre was then adapted to the Roman fashion. An elaborate architectural façade, consisting of columns and entablatures, was erected at the back of the stage, the old Lycurgean wall *n* being used as a foundation. A portion of the frieze from this façade is still in existence,

and contains the dedication to Nero which has already been referred to<sup>1</sup>. Two of the columns are also preserved in part. Behind the columns and frieze a wall was erected, according to the Roman custom; and at the same time new side-wings were built, slightly diminishing the length of the whole structure. The foundations of these erections are marked *p* in the plan. In Roman theatres, as we have seen, the stage projected much further forward than in the Greek. It was also reduced in height to five feet, so that the spectators in the orchestra might be able to see over the top. A stage of this type was doubtless erected in the Athenian theatre at the time of these reconstructions, though it has now entirely disappeared. But part of it seems to have been used for the existing stage, that of Phaedrus, by which it was replaced in the third century A.D. This stage, which is four feet three inches high, is adorned in front with a bas-relief. The bas-relief has obviously been constructed out of old materials, and has been much cut about, and curtailed several inches in height, before being placed in its present situation. It seems clear that it was intended originally for the Neronian stage, which must therefore have been about five feet high. The position of the front-wall in the Neronian stage cannot be determined from the ruins, but was probably much the same as in the stage of Phaedrus (*h-h*). One peculiarity of the Neronian reconstruction is the fact that the old Greek side-wings, with their rows of columns, were allowed to remain. But how they harmonised with the new Roman wings and columns it is difficult to conjecture.

The last change of which we have any trace or record was that effected by Phaedrus about two centuries later. The stage was then lowered several inches, and the front-wall erected in its present position. Half of it still remains, together with a flight of steps leading down from stage to orchestra. Such steps were common in Roman theatres, and had no doubt existed previously in the Neronian theatre. The bas-relief, which had formerly been a continuous one, was cut into sections, and arranged with recesses at intervals, the recesses being filled with stone figures.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 116.

One of these—a kneeling Silenus—has been preserved. As to the purpose of this reconstruction by Phaedrus there is much uncertainty. But Dörpfeld conjectures that it may have been due, partly to the ruinous condition of the old Neronian stage, partly to a desire to make the orchestra water-tight for the purpose of holding mimic sea-fights in the manner already described<sup>1</sup>.

### § 7. *The Early Stage-buildings.*

We have now described the various traces of stage-buildings in the Athenian theatre from the time of Lycurgus down to the time of Phaedrus. It remains to consider the subject from a more general point of view, and to supplement and illustrate the previous narrative by evidence derived from other sources. The first and most interesting question is the structure of the stage-buildings during the great period of the Attic drama from Aeschylus to Aristophanes. On this point the existing remains throw very little light. Still there are a few general conclusions which seem to be fairly well established. It is evident, in the first place, that the stage-buildings from the fifth down to the middle of the fourth century must have been made of wood, and not of stone. If they had been made of stone, it is difficult to believe that they would have left no traces behind them. As regards their shape, they probably resembled in general outline the stone structure erected by Lycurgus in the middle of the fourth century, and consisted of an oblong building with projecting side-wings. These side-wings were called 'paraskenia,' because they lay on each side of the 'skene' or stage, and are actually mentioned by Demosthenes in his speech against Meidias as forming a part of the pre-Lycurgean theatre<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, pp. 89-90.

<sup>2</sup> Harpocrat. (v. παρασκήνια) quotes Theophrastus for the definition of paraskenia as places on one side of the stage, used for storage purposes. The παρασκήνια τὰ τε ἐπάνω καὶ τὰ ὑποκάτω mentioned along with the σκηναὶ in the Delian inscription of 274 B. C. (Bull. Corr. Hell. 1894, p. 162 foll.) were doubtless side-wings. Demosthenes

(Meid. § 17) accuses Meidias of 'nailing up the paraskenia,' and so preventing his dithyrambic chorus from making its appearance. Probably he nailed up the doors out of the side-wings into the parodoi. The word is also explained by the commentators as = (1) the entrances to the orchestra (Didymus quoted by Harpocrat. l. c.), or (2) the entrances to the stage (Phot. and Etym. Mag.

But though the stage-buildings of the fifth century were constructed of wood only, they must have been firm and substantial erections, and at least two stories in height. The use of such contrivances as the 'mechane' and the 'theologeion,' by which gods were exhibited high up in air, would require buildings of not less than two stories, and of considerable solidity. Hence we may also conclude that they were permanent structures, and that they were not put up and taken down at each festival. No doubt, in the course of a century and a half, they were often renewed, and often changed and modified in detail, as experience suggested. During the first years of the fifth century, when there was only one actor, they must have been much smaller than they afterwards became, when the number of the actors had been raised to three. But after the middle of the fifth century, when they had reached their full size, it is unlikely that they should have been pulled down and re-erected more often than was rendered necessary by the mere process of decay. Whether the stage in these early buildings was protected by a roof or covering, running from one side-wing to the other, is uncertain. But a roof of this kind would have been a distinct advantage, for the purpose of concealing the crane-like mechanism by which the *deus ex machina* was exhibited.

To consider next the character of the early stage. The stage in Greek was called 'skene,' for the reason already mentioned<sup>1</sup>; and 'okribas,' because it consisted originally of a wooden platform<sup>2</sup>. It was also called 'logeion,' or the 'speaking-place,' because the actors stood there and carried on the dialogue. It was opposed to the orchestra, or dancing-place, in which the chorus went through their performances<sup>3</sup>. Another name for

s.v.; Bekk. Anecd. p. 292; Ulpian on Dem. Meid. § 17), or (3) the doors on each side of the main door in the back-scene (Suidas v. σκηνή). But these explanations are probably false inferences from the passage in Demosthenes, or from some other source.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> Hesych. v. ὑκρίβας· τὸ λογεῖον ἐφ' οὗ οἱ τραγῳδοὶ ἡγωνίζοντο. Plat. Symp.

194A ἀναβαίνοντος ἐπὶ τὸν ὑκρίβαντα μετὰ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν. The stage referred to in this latter passage was probably in the Odeion. See above, p. 91.

<sup>3</sup> Delian inscription of 279 B.C. εἰς τὸ [λογεῖον] τῆς σκηνῆς; 180 B.C. τῶν πινάκων τῶν ἐπὶ τὸ λογεῖον (Bull. Corr. Hell. 1894, p. 162 foll.). Phryn. p. 163 (Lob.) σὺ μέντοι, ἐνθα μὲν καμφοδοὶ καὶ τραγῳδοὶ ἡγωνίζοντα, λογεῖον ἐρεῖς.

it was the 'proskenion,' from its position in front of the 'skene,' or back-wall<sup>1</sup>. As regards the shape of the early stage, there is even less archaeological evidence than in the case of the stage-buildings. The stage continued to be constructed of wood long after the rest of the building had begun to be made of stone. As a result, all traces of it have disappeared. But certain inferences may be drawn from the structure of the Lycurgean stage-buildings. If we look at the outline of these buildings (*n-n*), we shall see that the side-wings project about seventeen feet. But in the reconstruction of the Hellenistic period, when a stone stage (*o-o*) was erected, the wings were drawn back about five feet on each side. It follows almost as a matter of certainty that the wooden stage of the Lycurgean theatre must have been about fifteen feet deep, so as to fill up the space between the wings<sup>2</sup>. This conclusion is confirmed by the remains of the original stage-buildings at Eretria, which are the oldest hitherto found outside Athens, and which apparently belong to the same period as those of Lycurgus<sup>3</sup>. Here too we find the same outline and dimensions. There is a long narrow building, with wings projecting

<sup>1</sup> Delian inscription of 290 B.C. τὴν σκηνὴν ἐργολαβήσασι καὶ τὸ προσκήνιον; 282 B.C. εἰς τὸ προσκήνιον γράψαντι πίνακας (Bull. Corr. Hell. 1.c.). Inscription on architrave of proscenium at Oropus (Griech. Theater, p. 103) ἀγωνοθετήσας τὸ προσκήνιον καὶ τοὺς πίνακας. Polyb. xxx. 13. τοὺς δὲ στήσας ἐπὶ τὸ προσκήνιον μετὰ τοῦ χοροῦ. The word προσκήνιον also denoted (1) the painted scenery at the back of the stage. Cp. Suidas v. προσκήνιον· τὸ πρὸ τῆς σκηνῆς παραπέτασμα. Nannio the courtesan (fourth century B.C.) was called 'proskenion' because of the deceptive character of her beauty (Athen. p. 587 B). A representation of Demetrius (third century B.C.) was painted ἐπὶ τοῦ προσκήνιου. (2) the drop-scene (in late Greek). Cp. Synesius (about 400 A.D.), Aegypt. 128 C εἰ δὲ τις . . . κυνοφθαλμίζοιτο διὰ τοῦ προσκήνιου.

<sup>2</sup> Dörpfeld (p. 69) denies that there was ever a wooden stage between the wings of the Lycurgean building. He thinks the space was originally filled up with a wooden proscenium, of the same height as the later Hellenistic one of stone; and that both these proscenia served as backgrounds, and not as stages. He argues that if there had been a stage, it must have been made of stone. But if he is justified in assuming the existence of an early wooden proscenium, we are surely justified in assuming the existence of a stage of the same material.

<sup>3</sup> The theatres of Epidaurus and Megalopolis were formerly assigned to about the middle of the fourth century. But it now appears to be proved that they were not earlier than the end of that century. See Dörpfeld, Griech. Theater, pp. 129 foll., 140.



about seventeen feet on each side<sup>1</sup>. From this evidence we are justified in assuming that the early Greek stage was considerably deeper than the later one, and was not less than about fifteen feet across. As to its height, we have no information beyond that which is supplied by the existing dramas. These dramas however show that in the theatre of the fifth century it was easy for the actors on the stage to converse with the chorus in the orchestra; and that there was nothing to prevent actors and chorus from passing from stage to orchestra and from orchestra to stage whenever they desired. Hence the stage of the fifth century cannot have been raised many feet above the level of the orchestra. The object of the stage was to place the actors in a prominent position, and to ensure that they should not be hidden from view by the chorus in front of them. This purpose would easily be effected by a stage of only a few feet in height. Some easy means of communication between stage and orchestra must have been provided, to enable actors and chorus to pass to and fro. A long flight of steps, or a sloping ascent, may have been used for the purpose.

Such then, as far as we can tell, was the character of the stage and stage-buildings during the early period of the Greek drama. The stage-buildings consisted of a long and narrow rectangular structure, made entirely of wood, not less than two stories high, and with side-wings at each end. Between the wings was a platform about fifteen feet deep, and a few feet in height, connected with the orchestra by a flight of steps or some similar method. This type of building lasted till about the middle of the fourth century. A new departure was then made. Stage-buildings began to be constructed of stone, at any rate in the lower stories. The earliest known examples are those at Athens and Eretria. But the stage itself still remained a wooden one. Its depth was still about fifteen feet. As to its height we have no information<sup>2</sup>. The latter part of the fourth century was

<sup>1</sup> See the plan in *Griech. Theater*, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> Dörpfeld (p. 69) argues that the original erection put up between the wings of the Lysurgian building must

have been 13 ft. high, since the back wall was adorned with columns and entablature of that height. But there is no proof of the existence of these columns and this entablature. In fact,

a period of transition and development in the history of the Greek theatre; and it was probably about this date that various new experiments began to be made in the structure and arrangement of the stage and stage-buildings. But the first steps in the process cannot be traced in detail, owing to the lack of evidence. The final results of the various experiments, as exemplified in the theatres of a later period, will be discussed in the next section.

### § 8. *The Hellenistic Stage-buildings.*

In describing the ruins of the stage-buildings in the Athenian theatre we showed that the first great alteration made in the old Lycurgæan structure was the erection of a stone stage in the second or first century B.C. This stage was about thirteen feet high, and from nine to ten feet deep, and was enclosed between shallower side-wings. The change effected at Athens is a type of similar changes which were carried out about the same time in most of the other Greek theatres with which we are acquainted. The recent excavations at Megalopolis, Delos, Eretria, and many other places show that from the beginning of the second century onwards stone proscenia of the kind just described became a regular feature in ordinary Greek theatres<sup>1</sup>. Moreover there is evidence to prove that even as early as the beginning of the third century proscenia made of wood, but resembling the later stone ones in height and depth, had begun to be erected in various cities. The theatre at Sicyon was built about this period, and the stage-buildings were to a large extent excavated out of the rock. The slopes which led up to the stage on each side, being cut out of the rock, still remain, and prove that the stage was about eleven feet above the level of the orchestra. The old wall which served

the evidence is all the other way. See above, p. 143. Prof. E. Gardner (Excavations at Megalopolis, p. 84) thinks there is actual proof of the existence of a low wooden stage at Megalopolis in early times. The question really depends on the date of the three lower

steps of the Thersilion, which he supposes to be considerably later than the stone auditorium. Dörpfeld, however (Griech. Theater, p. 140), assigns them to the same period.

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, pp. 100, 102, 113, 120, 143, 147, 150, 156.

as a foundation for the wooden proscenium is also partly preserved, and runs along the line of the later stone erection. In it are holes for the posts on which the wooden stage was supported<sup>1</sup>. At Eretria, again, the theatre was reconstructed about the beginning of the third century, and the orchestra was sunk about eleven feet into the rock, but the stage-buildings were left at their original level. Hence the wooden stage built in front of them must have been eleven feet high<sup>2</sup>. The theatre at Priene is somewhat exceptional. Here there are the remains of a proscenium belonging to the third century, but built of stone like those of later times. This however is the only instance yet discovered of a stone proscenium which can be ascribed with certainty to such an early period<sup>3</sup>. From these various indications it seems probable that the tall and narrow stage of the later type began to become general at the close of the fourth century, though at first it was usually made of wood. In the course of the second and first centuries this wooden stage was replaced in most theatres by a permanent one of stone. The evidence derived from the ruins as to the size and shape of the later stage corresponds, in most cases, with the statement of Vitruvius, the Roman architect, who wrote about the end of the first century B.C. In his account of the Greek theatre of his own time he lays it down as a rule that the proscenium should be from ten to twelve feet high, and about ten feet deep<sup>4</sup>.

From the numerous remains of these later stone proscenia which have been excavated during the last few years it is possible to obtain a fairly accurate conception of their general character. The upper surface, or stage proper, was made of wood. The front seems to have consisted in every case of a

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 115. There is the foundation-wall of a wooden proscenium at Megalopolis, apparently of the third century, and running on the same line as the later stone proscenium. But whether it was of the same height is unknown. See Excavations at Megalopolis, p. 85.

<sup>3</sup> Schrader, Berl. Philolog. Wochenschrift, 1898, April 16, p. 508. The stone proscenium at Epidaurus has sometimes been assigned to the end of the fourth century, when the rest of the theatre was built. But Dörpfeld thinks it more probable that it was a later structure (Griech. Theater, p. 232).

<sup>4</sup> Vitruv. v. 7.

series of stone columns supporting an entablature. The spaces between the columns were filled in with painted boards. The arrangements for holding the boards can still be traced in many theatres, such as those of Megalopolis and Eretria<sup>1</sup>. This architectural front was called the 'hyposkenion,' from its position beneath the 'skene' or stage. Pollux says it was adorned with 'columns and small statues<sup>2</sup>.' Statues, however, were not used as a decoration during the Hellenistic period. In Roman times they appear to have been sometimes inserted in the intercolumnia, in place of the painted boards. At Epidaurus, for instance, the space between the columns in the side-wings was filled in at some late period with groups of sculpture. At Delos, statues and other votive erections were placed along the front of the proscenium<sup>3</sup>. Possibly Pollux may be referring to these later customs; or he may have been thinking of the Roman stage, which was sometimes decorated in front with a sculptured frieze, like that of Phaedrus in the Athenian theatre. It is evident from the ruins that there was no permanent means of communication between the orchestra and the top of the stage. As regards the connexion with the interior of the stage the custom seems to have varied. At Priene there were three doors leading out into the orchestra<sup>4</sup>. At Athens the proscenium had one door in the centre, and another smaller one on the western side. But in most theatres there was only a single door, that in the centre; and this door varied in width from 3 feet 3 inches at Delos to 4 feet at Epidaurus<sup>5</sup>. At Megalopolis, however, and also at Thespiae,

<sup>1</sup> Excavations at Megalopolis, p. 87; Griech. Theater, p. 116. Cp. *ibid.* pp. 103, 150, for similar traces at Assos and Oropus. The architrave of the proscenium at Oropus bore the inscription ἀγωνοθετήσας τὸ προσκήνιον καὶ τοὺς πίνακες (*ibid.* p. 102). The Delian inscriptions of 282 B.C. and 180 B.C. mention πίνακες εἰς τὸ προσκήνιον, πίνακες ἐπὶ τὸ λογεῖον (Bull. Corr. Hell. 1894, p. 162).

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 124 τὸ δὲ ὑποσκήνιον κίσις καὶ ἀγαλματίους κεκόσμητο πρὸς τὸ

θέατρον τετραμμένους, ὑπὸ τὸ λογεῖον κείμενον. When Athenaeus (631 E) speaks of a flute-player waiting in the hyposkenion till his turn came to perform, it is uncertain whether the word there denotes a room under the stage, or is used generally for the whole of the stage-buildings.

<sup>3</sup> Griech. Theater, pp. 127, 147.

<sup>4</sup> Schrader, Berl. Philolog. Wochenschrift, 1898, April 16, p. 509.

<sup>5</sup> Griech. Theater, pp. 99, 102, 115, 125, 147, 150, 384. Dörpfeld now thinks

there is no door of any kind leading out from the front of the proscenium into the orchestra<sup>1</sup>. Probably most theatres had doors leading from the end of the stage-buildings into the 'parodoi' or side-entrances, though they cannot always be traced, owing to the scantiness of the remains. Their position would no doubt vary, according to the structure of the different theatres. At Epidaurus doors of this kind were placed immediately beyond the side-wings, at each extremity of the proscenium. The illustration which is here inserted (Fig. 9) will give a clear idea of the appearance of these Hellenistic proscenia. It represents a restoration of one end of the hyposkenion at Epidaurus. The front of the proscenium is

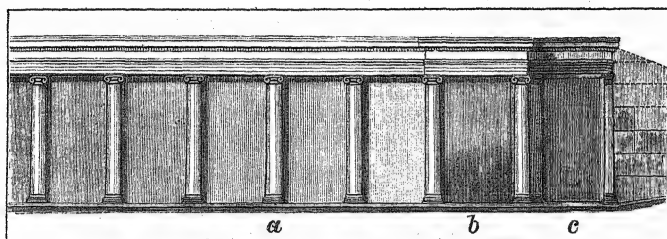


FIG. 9.

denoted by the letter *a*, the side-wing by *b*, while *c* marks the door leading out into the parodos<sup>2</sup>.

In size these proscenia usually conformed to the rules of Vitruvius, and were about ten feet deep, and from ten to twelve feet high. But sometimes they were much lower than he directs. The proscenium at Oropus was only 8 ft. 2 in. in height, that at Priene only 8 ft. 8 in.<sup>3</sup>. The proscenium at Delos is given variously as 8 ft. 3 in. and 9 ft. 2 in.<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand, the stages at Athens and at the Peiraeus

that there may have been three doors at Delos, but the matter is very doubtful (Bull. Corr. Hell. 1896, p. 570).

<sup>1</sup> Excavations at Megalopolis, p. 86. Chamonard, Bull. Corr. Hell. 1896, p. 296.

<sup>2</sup> The illustration is taken from

Baumeister's Denkmäler, iii. plate lxx.

<sup>3</sup> Griech. Theater, 103. Bull. Corr. Hell., 1896, p. 595.

<sup>4</sup> Chamonard (Bull. Corr. Hell. 1896, p. 296), judging from the width of the supporting columns, makes the height

were thirteen feet above the level of the orchestra<sup>1</sup>. The wings by which the stage was enclosed on each side sometimes projected a few feet beyond the front line of the proscenium, as at Athens and Epidaurus. Sometimes, as at Eretria, there was no projection, and the front of the wings was continuous with that of the stage. In many theatres, again, such as those of Megalopolis and Sicyon, there were no permanent side-wings, and the stage was terminated at each end by a mere wall<sup>2</sup>. In such cases it is probable that during the dramatic performances temporary side-wings of wood were erected. The theatres of Epidaurus and Sicyon exhibit a peculiar feature in the shape of certain ramps or sloping passages leading down from the top of the proscenium to the outside of the stage-buildings. The position of those ramps is clearly shown in the plan of the Epidaurian theatre (Fig. 6). It is possible that they were used by the chorus for the purpose of descending from the first floor of the stage-buildings to the entrance of the parodos.

When we turn from the stage to the stage-buildings of the Hellenistic theatre, our information is very incomplete owing to the scanty nature of the ruins. But it is probable that the stage-buildings began about this period to assume a more imposing appearance than in former times. We have seen that in the case of the buildings erected by Lycurgus there is some doubt whether the upper stories were made of wood or of stone. After the beginning of the third century it is probable that stone began to be used for all stories alike<sup>3</sup>. The buildings must also have been of a considerable height, to allow of a suitable back-scene above the tall proscenium<sup>4</sup>. As to the decoration of the wall at the back of the stage

of the Delian proscenium 8 ft. 2 in. Dörpfeld (*ibid.* p. 564), arguing that these columns must have been the same height as the pillars at the side-entrance, supposes the proscenium to have been 9 ft. 2 in.

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> See the plans in Griech. Theater.

<sup>3</sup> The remains at Sicyon and Eretria

show that at any rate the *first* story—that above the proscenium—was made of stone.

<sup>4</sup> The phrase *αὐτὰν σκηνήν* in the Delian inscription of 274 B.C. appears to show that the back-scene of that time must have been two stories high (Bull. Corr. Hell. 1894, p. 162).

nothing is known. In the later Greek theatres, built in the Roman fashion, this wall was constructed in an elaborate architectural design. It usually consisted of two or three rows of columns, rising one above the other, and each surmounted with appropriate entablatures and pediments. Its height was often as great as the top of the auditorium—an arrangement which was found to improve the acoustic properties of the theatre. Back-walls of this sumptuous character are still in part preserved in the Graeco-Roman theatres of Aspendos, Tauromenium, and various other cities. But it may be doubted whether the buildings of the Hellenistic period were either so lofty or so magnificent as those we have just described, though probably they too were not devoid of architectural ornament. As regards the doors which led from the back-wall on to the stage there is no positive evidence to be obtained from the existing ruins. But Pollux and Vitruvius state that they were three in number<sup>1</sup>.

The most essential difference between the theatre of the Hellenistic period and that of the fifth century lay in the substitution of a tall and narrow stage for a low and comparatively deep one. This change was far more important than a mere change of material from wood to stone. The question naturally arises, what was the reason for the alteration? The answer is to be found in the fact that the Greek drama itself passed through a no less radical transformation at the same time. In the course of the fourth century it was gradually transformed from a choral to a non-choral drama. When we come to the third century we find that the chorus, which once played the chief part both in tragedy and comedy, had sunk into insignificance. It was often discarded altogether. When retained, it had nothing to do but to sing interludes between the successive acts. Its presence no more implied that the play was a choral play, than the presence of the band in a modern theatre implies that the performance is an opera. The old intercourse between actors and chorus was a thing of the past. The low deep stage was no longer necessary,

<sup>1</sup> Vitruv. v. 6; Poll. iv. 124.

to enable actors and chorus to converse together, or to supply room, when required, for the presence of the chorus by the side of the actors. Under these circumstances it would obviously be an advantage to make the stage as high as possible, in order to improve the view of the upper rows of spectators. The ancient theatres were of enormous size. At Athens, for example, the topmost tier of seats was 300 feet distant from the stage, and 100 feet above the level of the orchestra. In such a theatre, the higher the stage, the better would be the view of the majority of the audience. It was doubtless for this reason that the stage was raised to about ten or twelve feet in the course of the third century. At the same time its depth was necessarily diminished, in order that the spectators in the lowest rows might be able to see down to the end of it. The loss of depth was of no importance in the acting of a play, because of the practical exclusion of the chorus from the stage.

In connexion with this subject a difficulty has been raised by some scholars which deserves consideration. It is generally admitted that the Vitruvian stage was well adapted for the later kind of drama. But the theatres of the Hellenistic age were used quite as much for the revival of old plays as for the representation of new ones. It is contended that the ancient plays, with their intimate connexion between actors and chorus, could not possibly have been exhibited on a stage which was raised twelve feet above the level of the orchestra. In answer to this objection it may be pointed out that the only ancient plays which were ever revived during the period with which we are now dealing were those of Sophocles and Euripides. Aeschylus and Aristophanes had gone out of fashion. The plays of Sophocles and Euripides could easily have been adapted for the Vitruvian stage by excisions and modifications in the choral part. If the chorus, as sometimes happened, took an important share in the dialogue, its part on such occasions might be given to extra characters on the stage. That the old plays were revised and adapted in this manner at a later period is proved by the express testimony of Dion Chrysos-



tomus<sup>1</sup>, and there is no improbability in assuming that the same practice had begun to prevail as early as the third century B. c. It might, however, sometimes be necessary, during the revival of the ancient dramas, to provide a means of communication between stage and orchestra. In such cases temporary wooden steps were placed in front of the proscenium. There is ample evidence for the use of this contrivance. Pollux tells us that when the actors entered by the orchestra, they ascended the stage by means of steps<sup>2</sup>. Athenaeus, the writer on military engines, speaks of the steps which were placed in front of the stage for the use of the actors<sup>3</sup>. Steps of this kind are depicted in several vase-paintings from Magna Graecia, belonging to the third century B. c., and representing theatrical scenes<sup>4</sup>. There is also a wall-painting at Herculaneum, which shows us one of these flights of steps standing by itself, with an actor's mask at the top<sup>5</sup>. From these indications we see that, although there was no permanent means of communication between stage and orchestra in the Hellenistic theatres, a temporary connexion could always be supplied when necessary.

### § 9. *The Stage-buildings in Roman Times.*

We have now followed the development of the stage-buildings from the old wooden erections of the fifth century to the more solid and elaborate structures of the Hellenistic period. All that remains is to trace their history during the later ages of Roman supremacy. We have shown that at Athens the stage-buildings were practically reconstructed after the Roman fashion in the time of Nero. The same tendency had already become

<sup>1</sup> Tragic Drama of the Greeks, p. 452.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 127. See below, p. 173.

<sup>3</sup> Athen. de Mach. p. 29 (Wesch.) κατεσκεύασαν δὲ τινες ἐν πολιορκίᾳ κλιμάκων γένη παραπλήσια τοῖς τιθεμένοις ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις πρὸς τὰ προσκήνια τοῖς ὑποκριταῖς. The meaning of this passage has been much disputed. But Weissmann (Scenische Anweis. p. 49 foll.) has shown conclusively, as it seems to me, from a parallel passage in

Apollodorus περὶ κλιμάκων, that Athenaeus is referring, not to ladders used on the stage for mounting the back-scene, but to steps about 12 feet high, placed in front of the stage.

<sup>4</sup> See Fig. 13. Other specimens are given in Baumeister, Denkmäler, ii. pp. 819, 820; Griechische Theater, pp. 322-324.

<sup>5</sup> Wieseler, Denkmäl. iv. 5.

prevalent in other places at a much earlier period. After the middle of the first century B. C. most of the new theatres built by the Greeks were constructed in the Roman style. The majority of the old ones began about the same time to be altered and modified under Roman influence. This latter process, however, was never carried out universally. It was confined mainly to the more outlying parts of the Hellenic world, such as Sicily and Asia Minor. In Greece proper it was a comparatively rare occurrence. Athens and Argos are the only cities on the Greek mainland which are known to have Romanized their theatres. Still, looking at the Greek world as a whole, it may be said that from the time of the Christian era the great majority of Hellenic theatres were adapted to the Roman model. It was at this period that the stage-buildings began to be constructed on a more lofty scale, and their front adorned with the gorgeous architectural embellishments which we have previously described. Some idea of their magnificence may be obtained from the existing remains, and especially from those of the theatre at Aspendos, which is well preserved. A restoration of part of the interior of this theatre (Fig. 10) is here inserted<sup>1</sup>. The back-wall erected at Athens in the time of Nero was of the same type, though smaller in size. Façades of this imposing character may perhaps be thought too elaborate for the back-wall of a theatre. When dramas were being performed, and they were covered with painted scenery, their architectural beauty would be concealed from the eyes of the spectators. But ancient theatres were regularly used, not only for dramatic performances, but also for various other purposes, both artistic and political. On such occasions, when the stage was without scenic decoration, the architectural grandeur of the back-wall would add greatly to the beauty of the stage-buildings, and form a pleasing object to the eye. Probably, too, at many of the dramatic exhibitions, when the action was laid before a temple or palace, painted scenery was dispensed with, and the architectural façade supplied an appropriate background.

<sup>1</sup> The illustration is taken from Lanckoronski, *Städte Pamphyliens und Pisidiens*, Wien, 1892, vol. i. plate 27.

It will be seen from the illustration that in the theatre of Aspendos there were five doors at the back of the stage. There was a large door in the centre, and two smaller ones on each side. The same arrangement was generally adopted in Graeco-Roman theatres. But Pollux and Vitruvius speak of three doors as the regulation number<sup>1</sup>. Possibly therefore the five doors of the later theatres were not all used during the dramatic representations. When the stage was prepared for the performance of a play, the two doors on the outside may have been covered up with scenery; or temporary side-wings may have been

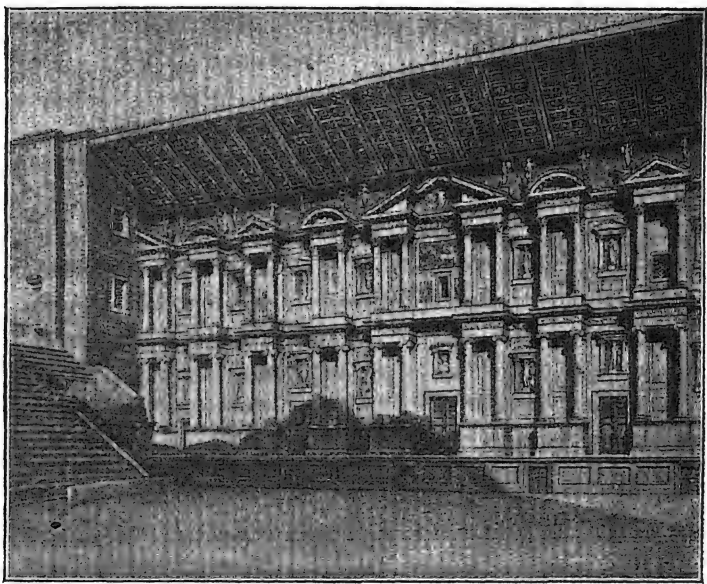


FIG. 10.

erected in front of them. Another noticeable feature in the theatre of Aspendos is the roof over the stage. Traces of a similar roof are also found at Orange, and justify the conclusion that in most theatres of the Roman type the stage was covered over<sup>2</sup>. Whether the same practice prevailed in the Hellenistic theatres there is no evidence to show. But

<sup>1</sup> Vitruv. v. 6; Poll. iv. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Müller, Bühnenalt. p. 28.

the convenience of the arrangement is so obvious, that we can hardly doubt that it began to be employed at a comparatively early period.

One point of great interest in connexion with the Romanization of Greek theatres is the fact that in a large number of cases the process was not carried out completely. Many theatres, whether built or reconstructed on the new model, still retained features which were essentially Greek. This was the case at Athens. The Greek stage was usually the same length as one diameter of the orchestra. The Roman stage was twice as long, and extended some distance into the wings of the auditorium on each side. There was no open space between the auditorium and the side-wings; the place of the old Greek 'parodoi' was supplied by vaulted subways. But at Athens, when the Neronian alterations were made, the stage was not prolonged in the Roman style, but remained of the same length as before. The entrances into the orchestra at *a* and *g* were thus left open (Fig. 3). In many other places, especially in Asia Minor, the Romanization was of a still more partial kind. In theatres such as those of Termessos, Perge, and Sagalassos the general outline of the building was hardly affected by the change. The front line of the stage was not pushed forward; the orchestra still remained nearly a complete circle; open passages were left between the auditorium and the stage-buildings. The only important alteration was in the size of the stage, which was lengthened at each end, and deepened by throwing the front of the stage-buildings farther back. The height of the stage was but slightly diminished. In a Roman theatre it was usually five feet. But the stages at Termessos, Sagalassos, and Patara vary from eight feet to nine, and were therefore very little lower than the ordinary stage of the Vitruvian type<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See Lanckoronski, *Städte Pamphyliens und Pisidiens*, vol. i. p. 51 foll., and plate 14 (Perge), vol. ii. p. 92 foll., and plates 10-13 (Termessos), p. 152 foll., and plate 26 (Sagalassos); Texier, *Description de l'Asie Mineure*, vol. iii. plates 181 and 182 (Patara), plate 215 (Myra). The stage at Ter-

messos was 8 feet high, that at Patara 8½ feet, that at Sagalassos 9 feet. At Magnesia and at Tralles, where in other respects the theatres were more completely Romanized, the height of the stages was 7 ft. 6 in., and 9 ft. 10 in. respectively (Griech. Theater, p. 156).

These examples show how trifling in many cases was the difference between the Graeco-Roman theatres and those of the purely Greek type. They also throw some light on another question of considerable interest. In Roman theatres all performances were confined to the stage; the orchestra was given up to spectators of distinguished rank. It may be asked whether the Greeks, when they built their theatres in the Roman style, adopted the same custom. The answer seems to be that they did not. It is most improbable that theatres should have been constructed in Asia Minor with the old full-sized orchestra, unless this orchestra had been intended as a place for choral performances. The fact that in many of these theatres the stage was eight or nine feet high proves the same thing. If the spectators had been placed immediately in front of it, their view would have been very much obstructed. We know, too, that in the Athenian theatre, even after the Roman stage had been introduced, the marble thrones round the orchestra continued to be the chief seats of honour. Hence it is evident that the orchestra must have been still a place for the performers, and not a place for distinguished spectators. The chief purpose of the Greeks, in Romanizing their theatres, was to provide a deep and capacious stage for spectacles of the Roman type, such as pantomimes and pyrrhic ballets. The old Greek performances were given as before in the orchestra. As far as the drama is concerned, the orchestra would seldom be required at this period, the lyrical part of tragedy and comedy having now practically disappeared. But the choral and musical competitions still flourished as vigorously as ever, and these were kept to their original place, and not transferred to the stage.

#### § 10. *Exceptional Stage-buildings.*

The stage-buildings which we have hitherto described have been those of the normal type. But there are several places in which peculiar and exceptional structures were erected, either for reasons connected with the nature of the ground, or for mere love of variety. Some of these may be worth mentioning.

The theatre at Pergamon was apparently built about the beginning of the second century B. C.<sup>1</sup> But the stage-buildings, instead of being made of stone, as was usual at that period, consisted of temporary wooden erections, which were put up and taken down at each festival. Stone blocks were let into the ground, with holes for the reception of the beams by which

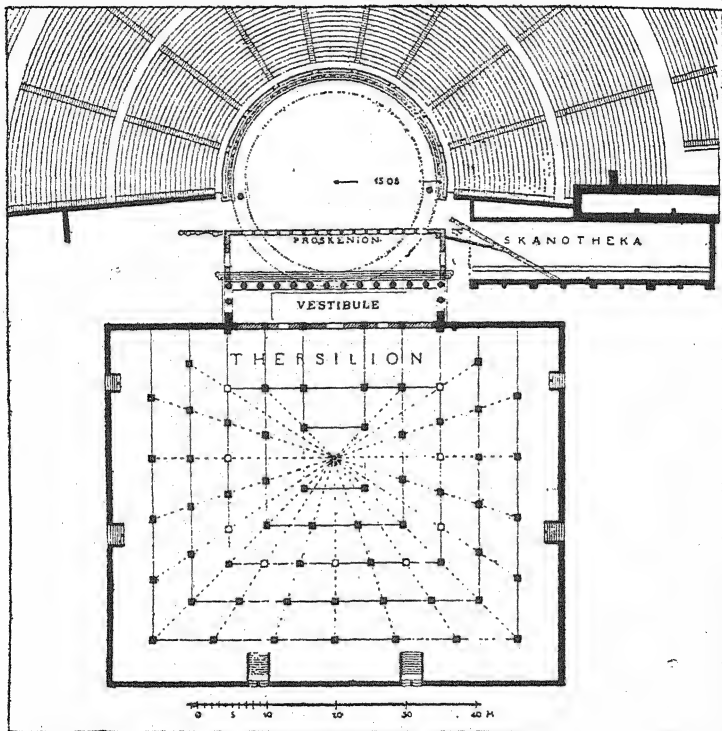


FIG. II.

the building was supported. When the performances were over, the whole apparatus might be removed in a short time. It was only at a later period that permanent stage-buildings were constructed. The reason for this curious arrangement, according to Dörpfeld, was to leave the way open to a temple in the neighbourhood. As the auditorium lay on a terrace, with

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 150 foll.

not much room in front of it, permanent stage-buildings would have filled up the whole space, and blocked the passage to the temple. Another remarkable instance of deviation from the ordinary practice is supplied by the theatre at Megalopolis<sup>1</sup>. In this theatre (Fig. 11) the place of the stage-buildings was taken by a vast council-chamber, called the Thersilion, which faced towards the auditorium. Its façade consisted of a vestibule, 26 feet high, and resting on a flight of five steps. Originally, when dramas were to be performed, a temporary wooden stage was erected in front of the Thersilion. The foundation-wall for a stage of this kind has been discovered, and lies at a distance of 24 feet from the columns of the vestibule. It is obvious therefore that the vestibule cannot itself have formed the background. A stage 24 feet across would have been far too deep for a Greek theatre. Temporary scenic decorations must have been erected some feet in front of the council-chamber. In later times a stone proscenium of the ordinary type was erected on the site of the old wooden one. But when this was done, it is probable that the Thersilion had fallen into ruins. Otherwise the beauty of its appearance would have been altogether marred by the stone structure in front of it.

But the most peculiar of the stage-buildings which have hitherto been discovered is that at Delos. A representation of the ground-plan (Fig. 12) is inserted on the next page<sup>2</sup>. This building consisted of a single oblong room. In front of it was an ordinary proscenium, about ten feet deep, and eight or nine feet high, resting on half-columns. The spaces between the columns were filled, as usual, with painted boards. The curious feature is that this same proscenium was continued in a modified form round the rest of the building, so as to serve as a portico. On the sides and in the rear it rested on pillars instead of columns. The spaces between the pillars were considerably

<sup>1</sup> See Excavations at Megalopolis, Supplementary Paper published by the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, 1892. The plan is copied from *Griech. Theater*, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> From *Griech. Theater*, p. 144. For the description of the theatre, see *ibid.* p. 144 foll.; Chamonard, *Bull. Corr. Hell.*, 1896, p. 256 foll.

wider than the spaces between the columns, and were left open, instead of being filled up with boards. Porticoes of this kind were often erected close to the stage-buildings, as a shelter from the rain; but the position of the one at Delos is altogether exceptional. Another remarkable feature in this building is the fact that the proscenium was open at each end, and was not even enclosed with a wall. When dramas were being

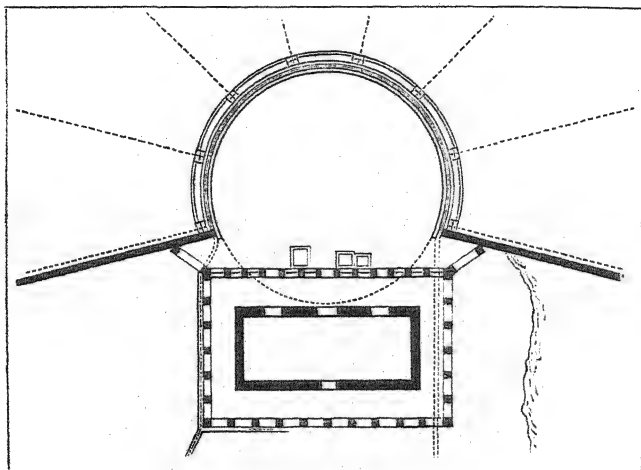


FIG. 12.

performed, wooden side-wings must have been put up for the occasion<sup>1</sup>.

### § 11. *Wieseler's Theory of the Greek Stage.*

In a Greek dramatic performance the relative position occupied by actors and chorus was quite unlike anything to be seen in a modern theatre. The actors appeared upon a raised platform, the chorus performed in the orchestra underneath. When the actors were present, and the dialogue was proceeding, the chorus

<sup>1</sup> Side-wings (*παράσκηνα*) are mentioned not unfrequently in the Delian inscription for 274 and 269 B.C. (Bull. Corr. Hell., 1894, p. 162) as forming part of the theatre. But the present

proscenium was probably erected in the second century. At that date the permanent side-wings must have been abolished.



stood with their backs towards the audience, and their faces towards the stage<sup>1</sup>. In the early period the stage was only of moderate height, and communication between stage and orchestra was therefore a matter of no difficulty. Later on, when the chorus began to be excluded from all share in the action, the stage was raised several feet, and the actors were thus placed some distance above the heads of the chorus. But both in the earlier and the later period, and whether the stage was a high or a low one, there was always a clearly marked distinction between the normal position of actors and chorus respectively. This fact places prominently before us the radical difference between a Greek chorus and that of a modern opera. It shows us that in the groupings of actors and chorus in a Greek theatre there could be none of that realistic imitation of ordinary life which is sometimes seen upon the modern stage. To produce effects of this kind would be impossible, where the chorus was standing beneath the actors, and with their backs towards the audience. This position of the chorus in the Greek theatre, which seems peculiar to our modern notions, was not due to any abstract considerations of propriety, but was merely the result of the peculiar circumstances under which the Greek drama was developed. Originally the performance was almost entirely lyrical, and the stage and the actors were a mere appendage. The chorus, being the principal performers, and the most prominent object of attention, occupied the central position in the orchestra. The actors were placed on a stage behind them, so as to be visible to the spectators. Eventually the dialogue between the actors completely overshadowed the songs of the chorus, and the lyrical element in the performance was treated as a kind of interlude. But the chorus still continued to occupy that prominent position in the theatre which its original importance had assigned to it.

<sup>1</sup> Dindorf, *Prolegom. de Comoed.* p. 29 καὶ ὅτε μὲν πρὸς τοὺς ὑποκριτὰς διελέγετο (ὁ χορὸς ὁ κομικός), πρὸς τὴν σκηρὴν ἀφώερα, ὅτε δὲ ἀπελθόντων τῶν ὑποκριτῶν τοὺς ἀναπαίστους διεξήκει, πρὸς τὸν δῆμον ἀπεστρέφετο. *Ibid.* p. 36

εἰσῆκει (ὁ χορὸς ὁ κομικός) ἐν τετραγώνῳ σχήματι, ἀφορῶν εἰς τοὺς ὑποκριτάς. *Cr. ibid.* p. 21; Dübner, *Prolegom. de Comoed.* p. 20; Schol. *Aristoph. Equit.* 505.

Since the beginning of the present century various difficulties have been raised in connexion with this subject, and various theories have been invented for the purpose of removing the supposed difficulties. All this speculation appears to have had its origin in the same source. Until quite recent years it was assumed by every scholar that the stage of the fifth century must have been of the same height and structure as the later stage described by Vitruvius. But it was felt that the dramas of the fifth century could not possibly have been written for a theatre in which the actors were raised about twelve feet above the level of the chorus. The relationship between actors and chorus in these early dramas is far too close to allow it to be supposed that they were separated by a barrier of this kind. Still, there was the testimony of Vitruvius, who said the stage was about twelve feet high, and whose measurements were supposed to apply to all theatres, early as well as late. The first attempt to meet the difficulty was made by Hermann, at the beginning of the century; and his theory was afterwards adopted and developed by Wieseler. According to this view the chorus did not stand upon the level of the orchestra, but upon a sort of subsidiary platform, erected immediately in front of the twelve-foot stage. The height of the platform, they said, was so arranged as to bring the chorus into moderate proximity to the actors, without concealing them from the view of the audience. This platform for the chorus was generally accepted by writers upon the Greek drama until about ten years ago. Its existence was defended, partly on general grounds, partly by an appeal to certain passages in ancient authors. To take the ancient authorities first. Hermann supposed that the platform was called 'orchestra' in a narrower sense. He cited a passage in Suidas, where the orchestra is described as coming after the 'skene,' and as being a wooden erection on which mimes performed. But in this passage the context clearly proves that the word 'orchestra' is used in its later sense as the 'stage'.<sup>1</sup> Wieseler endeavoured to

<sup>1</sup> G. Hermann, *Opusc.* vi. 2, p. 152. Etym. Mag., *v. σκηνή*; and in a more full. The passage occurs in Suidas and complete form in Schol. Gregor.

prove that the platform for the chorus was denoted by the word 'thymele.' Now 'thymele,' as we have seen, was a word which had a great many meanings in connexion with the theatre. It denoted, first, the altar of Dionysus; secondly, the orchestra; thirdly, the stage<sup>1</sup>. If the passages are carefully examined in which it is asserted that 'thymele' denotes a platform for the chorus in front of the stage, it will be found that in the majority of them the word is much more naturally explained as meaning the stage itself, or the orchestra. In one or two cases the language used is apparently due to a confusion between the different meanings of the term. In no case is there a clear and definite description of a platform standing halfway up between the orchestra and the stage<sup>2</sup>. If such a platform had really existed, it seems incredible that there should have been no mention of it. As far, then, as ancient authorities are concerned, the theory as to the existence of a platform for the chorus finds no support.

Nazianz. 355 B. The last version runs as follows:—*μετὰ τὴν σκηνὴν εὐθὺς καὶ τὰ παρασκήνια ἢ ὀρχήστρα. αὕτη δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ τόπος ὃ ἐκ σανίδων ἔχων τὸ ἔδαφος, ἐφ' οὗ θεατρίζουσιν οἱ μῖμοι. εἶτα μετὰ τὴν ὀρχήστραν βωμός ἦν τοῦ Διονύσου, τετράγωνον οἰκοδόμημα κενὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ μέσου, ὃ καλεῖται θυμέλη παρὰ τοῦ θύειν. μετὰ τὴν θυμέλην ἢ κονίστρα, τούτεστι τὸ κάτω ἔδαφος τοῦ θεάτρον.* It is clear that ὀρχήστρα here means the stage. This appears not only from the context, but also from the fact that it is said to have been the place for the μῖμοι. Wieseler bases upon the above passage his peculiar theory that the 'thymele' was the platform for the chorus, and not an altar at all. He relies on the words *τετράγωνον οἰκοδόμημα κενόν*. It is true that the passage is obscure. But if it proves one thing more than another, it proves that the 'thymele' was the altar of Dionysus, and stood in the orchestra.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the scholium quoted in the preceding note, the following

passages are cited to prove that *θυμέλη* sometimes = the special platform for the chorus, between the orchestra and the stage:—(1) Anthol. Pal. vii. 21 *πολλάκις ἐν θυμέλῃσι καὶ ἐν σκηνῇσι τεθελῶς* [βλαίσος Ἀχαρνίτης κισσὸς κ. τ. λ. (2) Corp. Ins. Gr. 6750 *δόξαν φωνήσεσαν ἐν σκηναῖσι λαβοῦσαν | παντοίης ἀρετῆς ἐν μέμοις, εἶτα χοροῖσι | πολλάκις ἐν θυμέλαις.* (3) Schol. Aristid. iii. p. 536 (Dindf.) *ὁ χορὸς ὅτε εἰσῆι ἐν τῇ ὀρχήστρῃ ἢ (MS. ῥ) ἐστὶ θυμέλη.* (4) Poll. iv. 123 *ἢ δὲ ὀρχήστρα τοῦ χοροῦ, ἐν ᾗ καὶ ἡ θυμέλη, εἶτε βῆμά τι οὖσα εἶτε βωμός.* (5) Isidor. Orig. xviii. 47 'et dicti thymelici, quod olim in orchestra stantes cantabant super pulpitem quod thymele vocabatur.' In the first and second passages *θυμέλη* obviously = ὀρχήστρα. In the third passage it = ὀρχήστρα or βωμός Διονύσου, according as ῥ or ῥ is read. In the fourth passage there is apparently a confusion of the two meanings of *θυμέλη* as 'a stage' and 'an altar.' In the fifth passage the two meanings of 'orchestra' and 'stage' are confused.

On general grounds there are several fatal objections to the theory. In the first place, if it were correct, we should have to believe that the Greeks first of all constructed an orchestra for the chorus to perform in; then built a stage twelve feet high; then, finding they had made their stage a great deal too lofty, got out of the difficulty by erecting a platform each year, to bring the chorus within reach of the actors. To suppose that the Greeks acted in this way would be to suppose that they were altogether deficient in common sense. In the second place, it must not be forgotten that the performances at the City Dionysia consisted of dithyrambs as well as dramas. The dithyrambic chorus consisted of fifty members, and stood in a circular position. They must therefore have required a very considerable space for their performances. The oblong platform in front of the stage would not have been large enough to accommodate them, but would have been large enough to encroach very extensively upon the orchestra, and to drive the dithyrambic choruses into one end of it. That such was the case is most improbable. In the third place, in the recently excavated Greek theatres there are no traces of any appliances for the erection of the supposed platform. We should have expected to find holes in the floor of the orchestra, and sockets in the hyposkenion, for the reception of the beams by which the platform was supported. But there is no theatre in which any such traces are to be found. Fourthly, on the floor of the orchestra at Epidauros a large circle is marked out with a stone border immediately in front of the stage (Fig. 6). It is difficult to resist the conclusion that this circle was intended for the performances of the chorus. For these reasons, combined with the silence of ancient writers, there appears to be no doubt that the platform for the chorus in front of the stage must be regarded as a fiction of modern times.

All the difficulties which this platform was invented to explain will disappear, if we assume that the stage of the fifth and fourth centuries was considerably lower than that of later times. It was only in the earlier period of the drama that

a close communication between actors and chorus was required. In the subsequent epoch the existence of a lofty stage presents no difficulty. And the assumption of a low stage for the period of Aeschylus and his successors is on general grounds the most natural one. We are told that originally, when the drama was still a lyrical performance, the coryphaeus used to mount upon a small table, in the intervals between the odes, in order to converse with the rest of the chorus. Later on, an actor was substituted for the coryphaeus. Later still, in the course of the fifth century, a second and a third actor were introduced. Now it is absurd to suppose that, while the coryphaeus was replaced in this tentative way by a gradually increasing number of actors, the old table on which he performed should have been suddenly converted into a complete Vitruvian stage, twelve feet high, and fifty feet long. It is much more natural to imagine that the development of the stage was also a slow and experimental process, and that in the fifth century its size was intermediate between the low table of the sixth century and the tall Hellenistic proscenium. The few traces of archaeological evidence which we possess concerning the early stage are distinctly in favour of this view. It is also supported by the well-known description in Horace. Horace, in his account of the development of Greek tragedy, tells us that Aeschylus 'erected a stage on beams of moderate size<sup>1</sup>.' Horace's information, as we know, was derived from Greek sources. Hence it appears that the ordinary Greek tradition favoured the belief that the early stage was a low one, and that it contrasted in this respect with the stage of later times.

### § 12. *Dörpfeld's Theory of the Greek Stage.*

Another theory of a far more revolutionary kind has been propounded in recent years by Höpken<sup>2</sup>, and amplified and

<sup>1</sup> Horace, *Ars Poet.* 278-280 'post numque loqui nitique cothurno.'

hunc personae pallaeque repertor  
honestae | Aeschylus et modicis in-  
stravit pulpita tignis | et docuit mag-  
<sup>2</sup> Höpken, *De Theatro Attico*,  
Bonne, 1884.

developed by Dörpfeld. Dörpfeld assumes, like Wieseler, that the proscenium of the fifth century must have been of the same height as that described by Vitruvius. But he gets out of the consequent difficulty by supposing that the proscenium was intended, not as a stage for the actors, but as a background. He denies the existence of a stage in purely Greek theatres either of the earlier or of the later period. He believes that in all Greek theatres the actors and the chorus performed together in the orchestra. The proscenium represented the palace or other building before which the action took place. The front-wall of the stage-buildings immediately behind the proscenium represented merely the sky. This theory has been the subject of much discussion and controversy during the last ten years. As it has been accepted by several scholars, it will be necessary to consider it in detail. I propose in the present section to explain the grounds on which, as it seems to me, it must be regarded as untenable; and to discuss at length the evidence on which the belief in the existence of a Greek stage is founded. In dealing with this subject it will be convenient to divide the period covered by the Greek drama into two parts, and to consider first the later part, from about 300 B.C. onwards; and then to return to the earlier period, that of the fourth and fifth centuries. The evidence in the two cases is somewhat different, and will be more clearly understood if taken separately.

I. THE LATER STAGE.—First, then, as to the later or Hellenistic period. Recent excavations, as was previously pointed out, have now given us a fairly clear idea as to the shape and structure of the stage-buildings during this period. We now know that from the beginning of the third century onwards the stage-buildings in an ordinary Greek theatre, though varying in detail, conformed to the same general type. They consisted of a long rectangular structure, in front of which was a narrow platform, usually about twelve feet high and ten feet deep. This platform was called the 'proskenion.' In the third century it

appears to have been generally made of wood. But in the course of the second and first centuries a stone proscenium was substituted for the old wooden ones in almost every theatre. What then was the purpose of this proscenium, this long platform, twelve feet high and ten feet deep, which we find in all Greek theatres after the fourth century? For an answer to this question we naturally turn to Vitruvius, who wrote a book about architecture towards the end of the first century B.C., and in the course of it gave a detailed description of Greek and Roman theatres. Vitruvius tells us that every Greek theatre has a stage, and that this stage is from ten to twelve feet high and about ten feet deep. Its narrowness is due to the fact that it is only used by the actors in tragedy and comedy; all other performers appear in the orchestra<sup>1</sup>. He adds that the Roman stage is much lower and much deeper, and this for two reasons. It had to be deeper, because all the performers appeared upon it. It had to be lower, because in a Roman theatre the spectators sat in the orchestra, and would not therefore have been able to see over the top of a twelve-foot stage<sup>2</sup>. Here then we seem to have a clear and final answer to our question. The proscenium which we find in all Greek theatres after about 300 B.C. answers exactly to the description of Vitruvius. It must therefore have been intended to serve as a stage.

Dörpfeld, it is well known, refuses to accept this conclusion. But his method of dealing with the testimony of Vitruvius has changed during the last two years. In his book on the Greek theatre he supposed that Vitruvius had been guilty of an error.

<sup>1</sup> Vitruv. v. 7 'ita a tribus centris hac descriptione ampliorem habent orchestram Graeci et scaenam recessiorem minoreque latitudine pulpitem, quod *λογεῖον* appellant, ideo quod eo tragici et comici actores in scaena peragunt, reliqui autem artifices suas per orchestram praestant actiones, itaque ex eo scaenici et thymelici graece separatim nominantur. Eius logei altitudo non minus debet esse pedum decem, non plus duodecim.' Whether under 'reliqui arti-

fices' Vitruvius included the dramatic chorus is very doubtful. The dramatic chorus had almost disappeared in his day. Moreover 'thymelici' as opposed to 'scaenici' generally means the competitors in musical and literary contests, as opposed to the competitors in dramatic contests. But the words of Vitruvius about the position of the actors upon the stage are free from all ambiguity.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. v. 6.

While admitting that he was correct in his measurements of the Greek proscenium, he asserted that he had made a mistake as to its purpose; that he had confused the background of the Hellenistic theatre with the stage of the Roman<sup>1</sup>. But this explanation is one which it is impossible to accept. It is absurd to suppose that Vitruvius was mistaken. He was a professional architect, writing about his own special subject, and writing at the very time when many of these Greek proscenia were being erected. His remark about the Greek stage is not introduced as an *obiter dictum*, but is made the basis of the distinction which he draws between Greek and Roman theatres. He had evidently therefore thought about the subject. But even if we suppose that he could make a mistake of this kind, even if we suppose that he had never been in Greece, and never seen a Greek play acted there, still it is incredible that such an absurd error should have remained uncorrected in his book. The connexion between Greece and Rome was so intimate, that there must have been thousands of people in Rome who had seen Greek plays performed in a Greek theatre, and knew how it was done. If Vitruvius had made this absurd blunder, some one would have been sure to point it out to him, and he would have had it corrected.

Since the publication of his book Dörpfeld has shifted his ground on this question<sup>2</sup>. He now suggests a new method of explaining away the testimony of Vitruvius. He supposes that Vitruvius, when speaking of the stage in the Greek theatre, was referring, not to the ordinary Greek theatre, but to the peculiar type of Graeco-Roman theatre found in various cities of Asia Minor, such as Termessos and Sagalassos. These theatres, as we have shown, exhibited a sort of transition between the Greek and the Roman model. While their general design was Greek, their stages were partially lowered and deepened, so as to come nearer to the Roman practice<sup>3</sup>. In theatres of this kind Dörpfeld admits that the actors per-

<sup>1</sup> Griech Theater, p. 364.

Athen. Mittheil. 1897, p. 444 foll.

<sup>2</sup> Bull. Corr. Hell. 1896, p. 577 foll.;

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 160.



formed upon the stage; and he contends that it is to them that Vitruvius refers, and not to the regular Greek theatres, in which the actors always appeared in the orchestra. But in the first place it is difficult to believe that Vitruvius, when he speaks of the 'Greek' theatre, should mean something quite different. Why should he describe as 'Greek' a type of building which was not found in Greece proper, and which was essentially a combination of Greek and Roman attributes? In the second place, the evidence of the existing remains is inconsistent with the new hypothesis. Vitruvius says that the proscenium in the Greek theatre should be from ten to twelve feet high, and in ordinary cases about ten feet deep. Now what do we find in the remains of the regular Greek theatres? We find that in the great majority of cases the height and depth answer exactly to this description. But when we turn to the Asia Minor theatres what do we find? The average height is from eight to nine feet, the average depth from twelve to eighteen. In the face of these measurements it is useless to contend that Vitruvius is alluding to the Asia Minor theatres. The type which he describes is the ordinary Hellenistic type.

The two facts already mentioned—first, the fact that Vitruvius tells us that every Greek theatre should possess a stage of a certain height, and secondly, the fact that all Greek theatres after about 300 B. C. are found to possess a stage corresponding exactly to his description—these two facts appear sufficient in themselves to decide the whole question. But there is no lack of further evidence. Various ancient writers may be cited as witnesses. Pollux, in his description of the Greek theatre, says that 'the stage is appropriated to the actors, the orchestra to the chorus<sup>1</sup>.' Later on he says that the actors, when they 'enter by the orchestra, ascend the stage by means of steps<sup>2</sup>.'

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 123 καὶ σκηνὴ μὲν ὑποκριτῶν ἴδιον, ἡ δὲ ὀρχήστρα τοῦ χοροῦ. Dörpfeld (p. 347) says that σκηνή here = 'the stage-buildings.' But the mention of the λογεῖον in the previous line of Pollux, and the description of the ὑποσκήνιον, almost immediately afterwards, as ὑπὸ τὸ λογεῖον κείμενον,

clearly show that the type of theatre described by Pollux was one which possessed a stage. If so, this stage must have been used by the actors.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 127 εἰσελθόντες δὲ κατὰ τὴν ὀρχήστραν ἐπὶ τὴν σκηνὴν ἀναβαίνουνσι διὰ κλιμάκων. Here too Dörpfeld (p. 347) thinks σκηνή = the house

The scholiasts to the extant dramas often speak of the performance in a Greek theatre as being partly in the orchestra and partly on the stage. The commentator on the Frogs asserts that the scene with Charon and the ferry-boat must be 'either upon the logeion, or in the orchestra.' Later on he says that Dionysus here appears 'not on the logeion, but in the orchestra.' The scholiast on the Knights discusses the question why the sausage-seller should 'ascend from the parodos on to the logeion.' There are other scholia to the same effect, which it would be tedious to quote<sup>1</sup>. In these passages from the scholiasts and from Pollux the point to notice is the following. They do not merely say that there was a stage in Greek theatres, but they describe the performance as one partly on the stage, and partly in the orchestra. Dörpfeld says they are all mistaken; that they lived after the Christian era, and were confusing the Greek theatre with the Roman. But this would not account for their mistake, if mistake there were. In Roman theatres all performances were confined to the stage; the orchestra was occupied by senators and other distinguished persons. How then can Pollux and the scholiasts have got this notion of a performance in which stage and orchestra were used at the same time? There was nothing in the Roman practice to suggest it. It can only have been derived from the Greek theatre. But apart from this, the suggestion that Pollux and the scholiasts were misled by their recollection of Roman customs is not a fortunate one. It implies that their writings were the result of personal observa-

in the background. But why should the actors have used steps to mount the house only when they entered the theatre by the orchestra? They would need them just as much if they entered by the doors in the back-scene.

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Ran. 183 ἡλλοιωσθαι χρῆ τὴν σκηνὴν καὶ εἶναι κατὰ τὴν Ἀχερουσίαν λίμνην τὸν τόπον ἐπὶ τοῦ λογείου ἢ ἐπὶ τῆς ὀρχήστρας. Ibid. 299 ἀποροῦσι δὲ τιναὶ πῶς ἀπὸ τοῦ λογείου περιελθὼν καὶ κρυφθεὶς ὅπισθεν τοῦ ἱερέως τοῦτο λέγει. φαίνονται δὲ οὐκ εἶναι ἐπὶ τοῦ λογείου ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῆς ὀρχήστρας. Schol. Equit.

149 ἴνα, φησὶν, ἐκ τῆς παρόδου ἐπὶ τὸ λογεῖον ἀναβῇ. διὰ τί οὖν ἐκ τῆς παρόδου; τοῦτο γὰρ οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον. Ibid. 506 λέγεται δὲ παράβασις . . . ἐπειδὴ παραβαίνει ὁ χορὸς τὸν τόπον. ἐστᾶσι μὲν γὰρ κατὰ στοῖχον οἱ πρὸς τὴν ὀρχήστραν (i. e. the stage) ἀποβλέποντες· ὅταν δὲ παραβῶσιν, ἐφεξῆς ἐστῶτες καὶ πρὸς τοὺς θεατὰς βλέποντες τὸν λόγον ποιοῦνται. Vit. Aesch. p. 8 (Dindf.) τὰ γὰρ δράματα συμπληροῦσιν οἱ πρεσβύτατοι τῶν θεῶν, καὶ ἐστὶ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ τῆς ὀρχήστρας θεῖα πάντα πρόσωπα.

tion. But no one can read a page of them without perceiving that they were merely compilations from Alexandrian sources. The scholiasts in many cases mention their authorities, and these authorities often go back as far as Aristophanes and Aristarchus, and even beyond. Although then they wrote after the Christian era, their statements really represent the opinions of the Alexandrian scholars. When they say that Greek dramas were performed partly on the stage and partly in the orchestra, it is evident that the Alexandrians thought the same. The testimony of Pollux and the scholiasts is really testimony of the third century B. C.

Another writer whose words appear to be decisive on this question is Horace. His statement about Aeschylus, to the effect that he 'erected a stage on beams of moderate size,' has already been quoted<sup>1</sup>. It is true that Horace is often inaccurate in his description of the early Greek drama. It may be contended, therefore, that his account of the reforms of Aeschylus is only of doubtful authority. But one thing is certain, that Horace, in describing the development of the Greek theatre, would never have mentioned the erection of a stage, unless a stage had been a regular part of the Greek theatres of his own day. Dörpfeld, in dealing with this passage, offers two alternatives. He first suggests that 'pulpitum' means the 'stage-buildings.' But he cites no authority for such a meaning, and none is to be found. The word 'pulpitum' in Latin always means a stage or platform. Then, if the first alternative seems unsatisfactory, he suggests that Horace has made a slip, and that he was confusing the Greek stage with the Roman<sup>2</sup>. But Horace, as we know, was for a long time in Athens, and must have often seen Greek plays performed. It is hardly conceivable, therefore, that he should have made a mistake on such a simple matter as the presence or absence of a stage.

To turn next to the archaeological evidence. The excavations of the last few years have brought to light several facts which bear closely upon this subject of the stage. The evidence

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 348.

derived from this source appears to be even more fatal to the new theory than the literary testimony. One of the most convincing proofs is that afforded by the structure of the stage-buildings at Sicyon, Eretria, and Oropus<sup>1</sup>. We have seen that, according to Dörpfeld's view, the proscenium was the background, and the action of the drama took place in front of it, in the orchestra. Obviously, if this was so, the most important part of the stage-buildings must have been the rooms immediately behind the proscenium, or in other words, behind the back-scene. Now what do we find at Sicyon? We find that one-third of the space behind the proscenium consisted of solid rock. The Sicyonians, in order to save the expense of erecting a lofty auditorium, excavated their theatre out of the rock to a depth of about twelve feet. But they attached so little importance to the rooms behind the proscenium, that they did not take the trouble to excavate the whole of this part. They left one-third of it as it was. It was only when they came to the first floor of the stage-building, the floor on a level with the top of the proscenium, that they provided clear room from end to end of the structure. Their conduct, on Dörpfeld's theory, was very peculiar. But the people of Eretria acted in a still stranger manner. They too excavated their theatre out of the rock. But they left the whole of the space behind the proscenium unexcavated. Consequently at Eretria the ground-floor of the stage-buildings was on a level, not with the floor of the orchestra, but with the top of the proscenium. There could hardly be a more decisive proof that at Eretria the actors appeared, not in front of the proscenium, but on the top of it. Then there is the case of Oropus. Here the stage-buildings were built upon the ground, and the rooms behind the proscenium were originally open from end to end. But later on the Oropians proceeded to fill up the greater part of the space with earth, and left only a narrow passage immediately behind the proscenium. Such conduct is irreconcilable with the supposition that the proscenium was the back-scene.

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, pp. 103, 113-116, 118.

Another proof is afforded by the height of the proscenium. The normal height, as already shown, was about twelve feet. But some proscenia, such as those at Athens and the Peiraeus, were as much as thirteen feet. On the other hand others were considerably less. That of Oropus, for instance, was only about eight feet high; and the columns which supported the entablature were only six feet six inches<sup>1</sup>. On Dörpfeld's view these proscenia, with their architectural front, represented the palace or other building before which the action took place. What then are we to think of a palace about fifty feet long, and only eight feet in height? The background at Oropus during the performance of a tragedy must have been a most peculiar one. We should remember that the Greek tragic actor walked upon 'cothurni,' which added about six inches to his stature. He also wore a mask with a lofty 'onkos' which raised his height by another six inches. Consequently the Greek tragic actor, when equipped for the stage, can hardly have stood less than about six feet six. This being so, if Dörpfeld's view is correct, it follows that the actor who took the part of the king at Oropus must have been just about the same height as the columns which supported the roof of his own palace. When he made his entrance through the central door of the palace, he would have to bend his head, in order to avoid knocking it against the cross-beams. Surely the theory is a weak one which involves such ridiculous consequences. If the Greeks had adopted a background of this absurdly diminutive height, without any reason for doing so, this fact alone would have been strange enough. But it must appear stranger still that, having once adopted it, they should proceed to add about twelve inches to the stature of their actors, in order to make the disproportion between the size of the actors and the size of the palace still more preposterous<sup>2</sup>.

The reason which Dörpfeld gives for the lowness of the proscenium—the background, as he calls it—is as follows. He says that such proscenia were first erected at Athens in the fifth century, and were intended to represent an ordinary house

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 153.

<sup>2</sup> This point is well brought out by

Chamonard, *Bull. Corr. Hell.* 1896,  
p. 296.

of that period. But the ordinary Athenian house of the fifth century was, he asserts, about twelve feet high<sup>1</sup>. To this theory there are several answers. In the first place, as we have seen, some proscenia were only about eight or nine feet in height; which is far lower than any ordinary Greek house, either at Athens or elsewhere. In the second place there is no clear evidence to show that the Athenian house of the fifth century was twelve feet high. From the remains lately discovered at Delos it appears that in the better class of houses there even the first story was more than twelve feet<sup>2</sup>. But granting, for the sake of argument, that an Athenian house of the fifth century was of the size which Dörpfeld supposes, it is difficult to see what this has got to do with the height of the scenic background. The Athenian theatre, we should remember, was developed originally as a place for tragedy rather than as a place for comedy. Comedy, at the beginning of the fifth century, was very little regarded. The background therefore must have been intended to represent, in most cases, a palace or a temple. But why should this palace or temple have been made the same height as an ordinary house? Moreover, the proportions must have appeared extraordinary. A structure about fifty feet long, and twelve feet high, would be altogether unlike any palace or temple. Dörpfeld replies to this that it is impossible on the stage to represent buildings as large as they really are; that in modern scene-paintings the representations of palaces and temples are much reduced in size as compared with the originals<sup>3</sup>. This is quite true. But they are reduced to scale, and in a proper proportion. A modern scene-painter, in representing St. Paul's, would no doubt have to make his representation much smaller than the actual St. Paul's. But in diminishing the height he would diminish the width at the same time. No modern scene-painter would produce a temple fifty feet long and twelve feet high; nor can we suppose that the ancients would have put up with a similar disproportion.

Again, there is the question as to the doors in the pro-

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 381.

<sup>2</sup> Chamonard, l. c. p. 294.

<sup>3</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 381.

scenium. If it was the background, it ought to have had three doors, the usual number in a Greek back-scene, as Pollux and Vitruvius tell us. But in most of the proscenia discovered there is only one door. In two of the proscenia, those at Megalopolis and Thespiae, there is no door of any kind. Even the single door, when it is found, is very narrow for the central door of the back-scene. At Epidaurus it is only four feet wide, at Oropus only 3 feet 8 inches, at Delos only 3 feet 3 inches<sup>1</sup>. A door so narrow as this would be altogether unsuitable as the central door of the palace, and quite inconsistent with the use of the ekkyklema. When we come to the Graeco-Roman theatres, where the wall at the back of the stage has in many cases been preserved, there we find everything corresponding closely with the descriptions of the grammarians. There is always the requisite number of doors, and the central door is of considerable width. At Termessos it is about seven feet<sup>2</sup>. As regards the absence of the three doors in the proscenium Dörpfeld gives the following explanation. These Hellenistic proscenia, as we see from the remains, consisted of an entablature resting on columns. The spaces between the columns were filled in with wooden boards. Dörpfeld suggests that when doors were required they might be provided *ad libitum* by removing the intervening boards<sup>3</sup>. But if three doors were regularly required in the dramatic performances, it is most improbable that they should not have been provided as a permanent fixture in the proscenium. It is most improbable that the Greeks should have put themselves to the trouble of opening out these temporary doors at each festival. In any case we can hardly doubt that, if the proscenium had been the back-scene, the Greeks would always have provided at least one permanent door, and would not, as at Megalopolis and Thespiae, have erected proscenia in which there was no door of any kind. The absence of a door in these two places seems to prove conclusively that communication between the orchestra and

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 152.

&c., vol. ii. plate 10.

<sup>2</sup> Lanckoronski, Städte Pamphyliens,

<sup>3</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 380.

the space behind the proscenium was a matter of no importance.

Another piece of archaeological evidence is supplied by the vase-paintings found in the Greek cities of South Italy<sup>1</sup>. Two specimens are here inserted<sup>2</sup>. These paintings, which have already been briefly referred to, belong to the third century B.C. They represent comic scenes acted by the Phlyakes. The Phlyakes were a sort of farcial comedians, whose performances

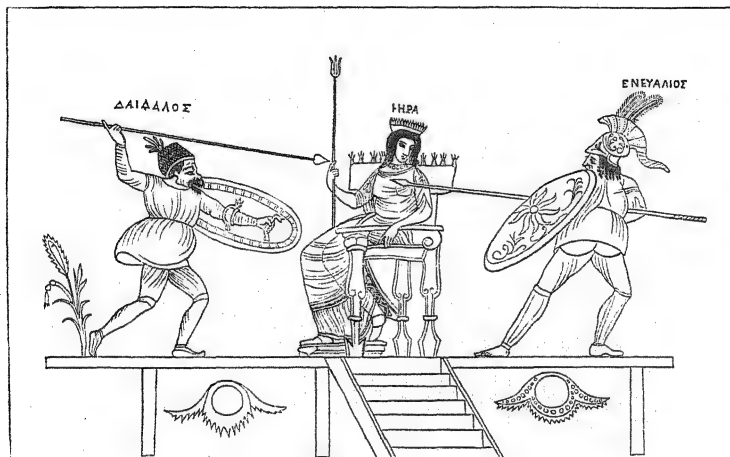


FIG. 13.

were not unlike those of the oldest Attic comedy. In many of these paintings they are represented as acting on a stage. The stage, in most cases, is obviously made of wood, and varies in character from a rude and simple platform to an erection of some solidity<sup>3</sup>. In one or two instances, however, it is a tall and elaborate structure, apparently built of stone, and adorned with columns in front, just like the proscenia

<sup>1</sup> On the subject of these vase-paintings see especially Heydemann, *Die Phlyakendarstellungen auf bemalten Vasen*, *Jahrb. Kais. Deutsch. Archäol. Inst.* 1886, p. 260 foll. Bethe, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Theaters*, p. 278 foll. Reisch, in *Griech. Theater*, p. 311 foll.

<sup>2</sup> They are taken from Wieseler's *Denkmäler*, ix. 14 and 15 (= Baumeister, figs. 1828 and 1830).

<sup>3</sup> Fig. 13. Cp. the specimens in Wieseler's *Denkmäl.* ix. 8; *Griech. Theater*, pp. 315, 322, and 323; Baumeister's *Denkmäl.* figs. 902, 903, 1826, 1827, 1829.



we have been discussing<sup>1</sup>. Often there is a flight of steps leading down to the orchestra<sup>2</sup>. In one case the action is taking place partly on the stage and partly in the orchestra. One of the actors is represented as actually ascending the steps to the stage<sup>3</sup>. This evidence seems to prove beyond a doubt that in the Greek cities of South Italy, during the third century B.C., performances were sometimes given in theatres with a tall stage, and that both stage and orchestra

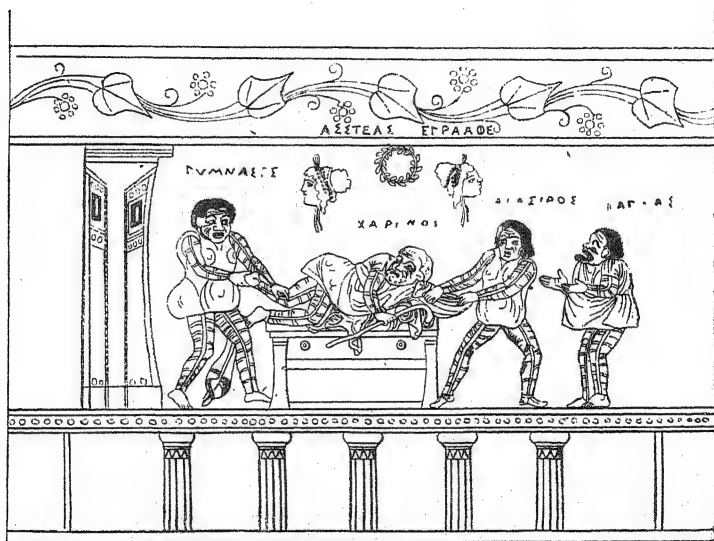


FIG. 14

were employed for the purpose, and were connected by steps. Dörpfeld now admits that this was the case. But he contends that the arrangement was an exceptional one, intended only for the farces of the Phlyakes. For these performances, he allows, wooden stages were erected, and the exhibition took place partly on the stage and partly in the orchestra. But the regular dramas—the tragedies, and the comedies—were

<sup>1</sup> Fig. 14. Cp. also the specimen in pp. 322-324; Baumeister, figs. 902, 903. Griech. Theater, p. 318.

<sup>2</sup> Fig. 13. Cp. also Griech. Theater, Theater, p. 322.

performed solely in the orchestra<sup>1</sup>. All this, however, is the purest assumption. There is not a particle of evidence to support it. It is altogether improbable that a different arrangement should have been adopted in the case of these farces, and in the case of the regular drama. Besides this, as we have already pointed out, in one or two of the paintings the stage on which the Phlyakes are performing is apparently a permanent stone erection, and not a mere temporary platform of wood. It seems certain, therefore, that the Greeks of South Italy during the third century B.C. provided a stage for their actors in all dramatic performances; and, this being so, we can hardly doubt that the same was the case in Greece generally.

One or two further objections to the new theory may be briefly mentioned. If we look at the plan of the theatre at Epidaurus (Figs. 6 and 7), it will be found that the stone border of the circular orchestra reaches to within two or three feet of the proscenium. If the actors had performed in front of the proscenium, they would have been sometimes inside the stone border, and sometimes outside of it; and the whole arrangement strikes one as awkward and unsymmetrical. Again, in the theatre at Delos (Fig. 12), statues and other votive offerings were erected immediately in front of the columns of the proscenium. The bases on which they rested still remain<sup>2</sup>. But, if the proscenium had been the background, it is difficult to suppose that this place would have been chosen for such erections. When the proscenium was uncovered by scenery, and represented an ancient palace, these votive offerings and statues would have been altogether inappropriate as a part of the back-scene. When painted decorations were to be set up, they would have formed an inconvenient obstacle in the way of the mechanical arrangements.

We have now gone through the principal arguments, literary and archaeological, which demonstrate the existence of a stage during the Hellenistic period. It remains to consider the reasons which induce Dörpfeld, in spite of this apparently

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 327.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 147.

overwhelming evidence, to deny the existence of such a stage. And in judging this question we must remember the fact already mentioned, that the chorus, at this time, had ceased to take an active share in the play, and that its functions were hardly more important than those of a band of musicians in a modern theatre. To turn now to Dörpfeld's reasons. He says, in the first place, that these proscenia of the Vitruvian type would have been too narrow for the performance of a play<sup>1</sup>. But their narrowness has often been exaggerated, owing to inaccurate calculations. None of them, as it now appears, were less than from nine to ten feet in depth<sup>2</sup>. But a stage about ten feet deep, and from fifty to sixty feet long, would be amply sufficient for the performance of a Greek play, when the chorus was confined to the orchestra. The fact has been proved by actual experiment. Most English scholars have probably seen the Greek plays produced in the open-air theatre at Bradfield. The stage there is only ten feet deep and thirty feet long. Yet every one who has been present at one of these performances must admit that there was plenty of room upon the stage. I am informed that on one occasion, in the funeral procession in the *Alcestis*, as many as sixty people were brought upon the stage at the same time, and without any inconvenient crowding<sup>3</sup>. It is clear then that the Vitruvian stage, which was just as deep and twice as long as that at Bradfield, would have been large enough to accommodate the chorus as well as the actors in an ancient Greek drama, and would have been more than large enough for the performance of a play in which the chorus was practically confined to the orchestra.

Dörpfeld further objects that these Hellenistic proscenia

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 361.

<sup>2</sup> The stage at Athens was about 9 ft. 3 in.; at Epidaurus about 10½ ft. (Griech. Theater, pp. 78, 128). That at Delos was about 10 ft. (Chamonard, Bull. Corr. Hell. 1896, p. 306). As Lechat (*Épidaure*, p. 208) points out, it is necessary, in calculating the depth, not to measure from wall to wall, but

to take into account the projecting cornice. In some cases, as he also remarks, the wall of the back-scene may have been narrower than the wall beneath, on which it rested; and this would add slightly to the depth of the stage.

<sup>3</sup> These facts and measurements have been kindly supplied to me by Dr. Gray.

were too high to have served as a stage<sup>1</sup>. The obvious answer is that, if they were too high for a stage, they would have been much too low for a background. Their height varied from eight to thirteen feet. But a stage of thirteen feet would be far less of an anomaly than a back-scene of eight feet. Apart, however, from this consideration, there is no reason to suppose that a Vitruvian stage would have appeared abnormally large in theatres of the ancient Greek type. There were no spectators sitting in front of it. The audience was excluded from the orchestra. And the height of the auditorium was so great, that a lofty stage, as already shown, would be a distinct advantage. As for the objection that the chorus could not have conversed with the actors, if they had been separated from them by a difference in level of twelve feet, this is answered by the fact already referred to, that by the beginning of the third century the chorus had ceased to take any share in the dialogue.

Another objection of Dörpfeld's is that in the existing *proscenia* there is no trace of any means of communication between the stage and the orchestra<sup>2</sup>. But we have shown that such communication was seldom required at this time, owing to the insignificance of the chorus; and that, when it was wanted, it was supplied by temporary wooden steps. Dörpfeld replies that, if the stage was thirteen feet high, the steps must have been so large as to project a long way into the orchestra, and produce an unsightly appearance. But this result could have been avoided without difficulty. Where the stage was exceptionally lofty, the steps might have been placed in a parallel line to it. At Tralles, where there is a *proscenium* of the Graeco-Roman type, and nearly ten feet high, such steps are actually found, lying parallel to the stage, and on each side of the door which leads out from the front wall of the stage into the orchestra<sup>3</sup>. A similar arrangement might easily have been adopted, when necessary, in the Hellenistic theatres.

In support of his theory Dörpfeld brings forward an argument based on the theatre at Megalopolis (Fig. 11). We have

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 342.

<sup>3</sup> Athen. Mittheil. 1893, p. 410.

already described the peculiar construction of this theatre, in which the Thersilion took the place of the ordinary stage-buildings. In front of the Thersilion, and twenty-four feet distant from it, is the foundation-wall of a wooden proscenium. This proscenium, however, appears to have been of later date than the original theatre. Dörpfeld supposes that, before its erection, the actors performed their parts immediately in front of the Thersilion, and on the level of the orchestra. He bases his belief on the following grounds. The façade of the Thersilion rested on a flight of five steps, each about thirteen inches high. To one side of the Thersilion was a building, apparently called the Skanotheka, and probably used for storing the scenic decorations. In this building are the remains of a low wall, running in the same straight line as the bottom of the flight of steps, and about the same length as the stage must have been. Dörpfeld supposes that this wall was used, in the original state of the theatre, for working a 'scaena ductilis.' He supposes that, when dramas were to be performed, a wooden scene-painting was pushed out along this wall immediately in front of the lowest step of the Thersilion, and served as a background. The actors in front of it must have been on the floor of the orchestra<sup>1</sup>. But this arrangement appears to be impossible. If the back-scene had been placed in the position he supposes, immediately in front of the steep flight of steps, the representation of dramas under such circumstances would have been little short of ridiculous. The actor entering from the back-scene would have had to come down these steps to reach the threshold of the door. At first little more than his legs would have been seen, at any rate by the spectators in the upper part of the theatre. His whole person would hardly have become visible until he reached the lowest step. For a tragic actor to make his entrance in this way would have been far from dignified. Also, in plays like the *Hippolytus* and the *Alcestis*, when a sick woman on a couch had to be carried out, it would have been extremely awkward to have to carry her down a flight of steps as steep

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, pp. 138, 139.

as those at Megalopolis. The *ekkyklema* would, of course, have been quite impossible to work. Although, therefore, the *Skanotheka* at Megalopolis may very likely have been used for the storage of scenery, it is clear that this scenery, when used, cannot have been put up in the place which Dörpfeld suggests.

Another argument against the ordinary theory is based by Dörpfeld on the remains of the theatre at Delos (Fig. 12). We have shown that at Delos the *proscenium* was continued, though in a different form, round the sides and back of the stage-buildings<sup>1</sup>. Dörpfeld argues that it cannot have been a stage, as it would be absurd to erect a stage all round the stage-buildings<sup>2</sup>. If this is so, we might reply that it cannot have been a background either, since it would be equally absurd to construct a background in the same position. But as a matter of fact there is nothing in the arrangement at Delos which conflicts in any way with the ordinary opinion about the Greek stage. The erection at the sides and the back of the stage-buildings, though of the same height as the erection in front, was different in structure, and formed an open portico. The erection in front was like the usual Hellenistic *proscenium*, and must have been designed for the same purpose. If the *proscenium* in other theatres was intended for a stage, it must have been intended for a stage at Delos.

Dörpfeld has a theory about the origin of the Roman stage, which he brings forward as a strong argument in favour of his other views. According to Vitruvius the Roman stage was developed out of the Greek. The difference in size was due to the following reasons. The Romans preferred to give up the orchestra to the spectators, and transferred all performances to the stage. It was necessary, therefore, to deepen the stage, in order to find room for the additional performers. It was also necessary to lower it, in order to allow the spectators in the orchestra to have a clear view<sup>3</sup>. Dörpfeld says that this account of the matter is erroneous. According to his theory the Roman stage was discovered by accident rather than by design.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 146.

<sup>3</sup> Vitruv. v. 6.

The Romans, when they first began to adapt the Greek theatre to their own purposes, found the orchestra too large, and consequently divided it in two. The half nearest the auditorium they dug out to a depth of five feet, and placed spectators there. The other half they used for theatrical and other performances, just as it had been used by the Greeks. In this way they found that they had got what was practically a stage five feet high; and for the future, instead of digging out the nearer half of the orchestra, they started on the level, and built a raised stage. The Roman stage therefore represents, not the Greek proscenium, but the further half of the Greek orchestra; and this fact proves that it was in the orchestra that the Greek actors performed<sup>1</sup>. This theory is no doubt extremely ingenious. But unfortunately it appears to be inconsistent with the facts of the case. If it was true, we should expect to find the stage in all Roman theatres occupying the site of one half of the Greek orchestra, and the back of the Roman stage corresponding to the front of the Greek proscenium. Now in the normal Roman theatre this is more or less the case. The Romans eventually reduced their orchestra to a semi-circle, and brought their stage forward to the position described by Dörpfeld. But the Graeco-Roman theatres of Asia Minor, to which we have already referred, fail entirely to correspond to his hypothesis. These theatres were among the earliest to be built in the Roman fashion, and might therefore be expected, more than any others, to exemplify the process of transition which he describes. But what do we find? We find that the stage, so far from occupying one half of the orchestra, stands in exactly the same position as the old Greek proscenium. The orchestra in these theatres still forms nearly a complete circle. The stage is deepened by pushing the back-scene more into the rear. Further than this, the height of the stage is not five feet, as it ought to be, but from eight to nine feet<sup>2</sup>. These examples seem to prove that Vitruvius is more correct than Dörpfeld in his view of the matter; and that the Roman stage was really a modification of the Greek. When we find

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 385 foll.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 160.

in these Asia Minor theatres a Roman stage standing in exactly the same position as the proscenium in the Greek theatres, and differing only in being longer and deeper, and two or three feet lower, we can hardly resist the conclusion that the Greek proscenium was the prototype of the Roman, and that it was intended for the same purpose.

The proscenium in a Greek theatre was called, among other names, the 'logeion' or 'speaking-place.' It is so called by Vitruvius, and the word 'logeion' occurs in Delian inscriptions as early as the third century B.C.<sup>1</sup> This being so, we are naturally led to ask how this fact is to be reconciled with Dörpfeld's theory. If the proscenium was the background, and not the stage, why should it have been called 'logeion' or the speaking-place? Dörpfeld gives the following answer. He says that in Greek tragedies the gods, when exhibited in a super natural manner, used to make their appearance on the palace roof, or, in other words, on the proscenium; and that it was therefore called the 'theologeion,' or for shortness the 'logeion'.<sup>2</sup> But this statement will not bear examination. The usual device for revealing gods in supernatural splendour was the mechane, and not the theologeion. Even when the theologeion was employed, there is no evidence to show that it was identical with the palace roof<sup>3</sup>. The contrivance for enabling actors to stand on the roof of a palace or other building was called the 'distegia.' Instances of its employment are very rare. In the extant dramas there are only eight or nine certain examples<sup>4</sup>. If, therefore, the proscenium really represented the building in the background, the top of it cannot have been called the 'speaking-place' because the actors spoke from it. Eight or nine instances out of forty-four dramas are insufficient to justify us in regarding it as a regular speaking-place.

We have now considered the principal arguments which

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 365.

<sup>3</sup> On these points see below, pp. 238-242. Even if we suppose that the theologeion was used in the cases mentioned on pp. 241 and 242, to exhibit the deus

ex machina, the text of the plays shows that the god appeared *above* the roof, and not upon it. Cp. Ion 1549 ὑπερ-τελὴς οἶκον, Orest. 1631 ἐν αἰθέρος πτυχαῖς.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 212.



can be brought forward on both sides concerning this stage question, as far as it relates to the Hellenistic period. Some minor points have been omitted; but they would not affect the question very much either way. The result appears to show that, at any rate as far as the Hellenistic period is concerned, the evidence in favour of a stage altogether outweighs any considerations which can be adduced on the other side.

2. THE EARLIER STAGE. We now come to the earlier and more important period, the period of the fourth and fifth centuries, when the drama was still in reality a choral drama. Of course the position of the chorus differed very much at different stages during this epoch. At the commencement of the fifth century it was all-important; during the latter half of the fourth century it had begun to sink into obscurity. Still, speaking generally, we may regard the fourth and fifth centuries as a time when the chorus still played a significant part. As a consequence the conditions of a dramatic performance were very different from what they afterwards became throughout the Hellenistic and Roman epochs.

Let us consider first what is the literary evidence for the existence of a stage during these two centuries. For the fourth century we have the testimony of Aristotle. Aristotle in many places speaks of the songs of the actors as τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς, in opposition to the songs of the chorus, τὰ τοῦ χοροῦ<sup>1</sup>. Further he speaks of the actor's part as being played ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς<sup>2</sup>. According to the usual interpretation of these passages, he means that the actors played their part 'upon the stage,' and sang their songs 'from the stage.' Dörpfeld, however, proposes in these cases to translate the word σκηνή as the 'background,' and not as the 'stage.' He supposes Aristotle to mean that the actors performed 'at the background,' and

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. Probl. xix. 15 τὰ μὲν ἀπὸ σκηνῆς οὐκ ἀντίστροφα, τὰ δὲ τοῦ χοροῦ ἀντίστροφα: ὁ μὲν γὰρ ὑποκριτῆς ἀγωνιστὴς, ὁ δὲ χορὸς ἤττον μίμνεται. Poet. c. 12 ἴδια δὲ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ κόμμοι . . . κόμμος δὲ θρήνος κοινὸς χοροῦ

καὶ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς.

<sup>2</sup> Poet. c. 24 διὰ τὸ ἐν μὲν τῇ τραγωδίᾳ μὴ ἐνδέχεσθαι ἅμα πραττόμενα πολλὰ μέρη μιμῆσθαι, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν μέρος μόνον. Cp. cc. 13, 17.

sang their songs 'from the background.' He denies that the two expressions imply the existence of a stage<sup>1</sup>. Now the translations which he suggests may be possible, as far as the Greek is concerned. But it is very difficult to believe that they are the right translations in these particular passages of Aristotle. Aristotle's words seem to clearly imply that there was some essential and conspicuous difference between the position of the actors and that of the chorus. But if, as Dörpfeld thinks, they all performed together in the orchestra, there would be no such distinguishing mark. It is true that the actors might, for the most part, be rather nearer to the stage-buildings; and the chorus might, for the most part, be rather more distant from them. But practically they would be standing in the same place; there would be no pronounced difference. Aristotle's words appear to be explicable only on the supposition that the actors appeared upon a stage, the chorus in the orchestra.

For the fifth century we have the evidence supplied by the use of certain words in Aristophanes. In three places, where an actor is approaching the back-scene, he is said to 'mount up' (*ἀναβαίνειν*)<sup>2</sup>. In two other places, where he is leaving the back-scene, he is said to 'go down' (*καταβαίνειν*)<sup>3</sup>. In all these passages there is nothing in the circumstances of the drama to suggest that the action was taking place on raised ground. The expressions can only refer, as the scholiast says, to the stage. It has been proposed to translate the two words as 'come on' and 'depart' respectively<sup>4</sup>. But such a usage of the terms is otherwise unknown in Greek. Moreover, in one place—the scene in the *Knights*—this translation is proved to be impossible. Here Demosthenes calls out to the sausage-

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, pp. 284, 346.

<sup>2</sup> Equit. 148 *δεῦρο δεῦρ', ὦ φίλτατε, | ἀνάβαινε σωτήρ τῇ πόλει καὶ νῦν φάεῖς*. Acham. 732 *ἄμβατε ποττὰν μάδδαν*. Vesp. 1342 *ἀνάβαινε δεῦρο χρυσομηλό-λόνθιον*.

<sup>3</sup> Eccles. 1151 *τί δήτα διατρίβεις ἔχων, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἄγεις | τασδί λαβάν; ἐν ὅσῳ δὲ καταβαίνεις, ἐγὼ | ἐπαύσομαι κ.τ.λ.* Vesp.

1514 *ἀτὰρ καταβατέον γ' ἐπ' αὐτοῦς*. In the last passage *καταβατέον* might perhaps mean, 'I must contend with them.' But it is more probable that the meaning here is the same as in the other passage.

<sup>4</sup> Bodensteiner, *Scenische Fragen*, pp. 699, 700. Capps, *The Stage in the Greek Theatre*, pp. 67, 68.

seller, 'mount up here' (*ἀνάβαινε δεῦρο*). He then shows him the people, the markets, and the harbours; and tells him that he will be lord of all. But this is not enough. He says, 'you have not seen all yet,' and bids him 'mount up on to this table also'; and then proceeds to show him the islands round about<sup>1</sup>. These words show conclusively that *ἀναβαίνειν* must mean 'mount up' in the previous passage, and likewise determine the meaning of this word, and of *καταβαίνειν*, in the other parallel passages.

The evidence just cited from Aristotle and Aristophanes is a strong argument in favour of the existence of a stage during the fourth and fifth centuries. We have next to consider what light is thrown on this question by the character of the extant dramas. These dramas have been carefully ransacked during the last few years, and several treatises have been published containing every passage which bears upon the subject<sup>2</sup>. It is not likely that many new points will now be discovered. Much of the evidence that has been brought forward on both sides of the question is really of little value. It depends upon a too scrupulous and literal interpretation of the text, or upon a forgetfulness of the fact that there is much that is conventional in all dramatic performances. For instance, when old men are approaching the palace, and complain of the steepness of the way, this fact is supposed to be a proof of the existence of a stage<sup>3</sup>. It is suggested that they enter by the orchestra, and that the ascent of which they complain is the ascent on to the stage. But, if this was so, these old men must have timed their entrance very exactly, so as to reach the foot of the stage just when they came to the verses in which they began to grumble about the ascent. There would be something rather ludicrous in the whole proceeding. It seems more natural to assume

<sup>1</sup> Equit. 169 ἀλλ' ἐπανάβηθι καὶ πρὸς τοὺς λαὸν τοῖς. The significance of this line, as regards the present question, was first pointed out by Zacher, Philologus, 1896, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> Harzmann, Quaestiones Scenicae, 1889. White, The Stage in Aristophanes, 1891. Capps, The Stage in the Greek Theatre, 1891. Bodensteiner, Scenische

Fragen, 1893. Weissmann, Die scenische Aufführung der griechischen Dramen, 1893.

<sup>3</sup> Eur. El. 489, Ion 727, Herc. Fur. 119. In the last passage it is the chorus which makes the complaint; so that in this case, if there was any visible ascent, it cannot have been the ascent on to the stage.

that their remarks had no reference to the stage, and that the steepness of which they complain was left to the imagination of the spectators. Then again, the appearances of ghosts and spectres are cited as evidence in favour of a stage. It is said that they could not be made to appear from underground, unless there was a raised platform out of which they ascended. Now there is no doubt that in the later theatre ghosts were made to arise from beneath the earth. Pollux gives a description of the mechanism by which it was done. But there is no certain proof that they made their appearance in this way during the fifth century. It would be unsafe, therefore, to infer anything from these spectral apparitions concerning the structure of the early theatre. Again, there are those scenes in which the chorus might be expected to enter the palace, but fail to do so. For instance, when Medea's children are being murdered, and call out for help, the chorus, after proposing to rush to their assistance, eventually remain where they are and sing an ode<sup>1</sup>. But it is unnecessary, in this and in similar cases, to explain their inaction by supposing that there was any difficulty in passing from the orchestra to the palace because of the stage which lay between. A sufficient reason is to be found in the fact that, if they had gone into the palace, the scene of action would have been left empty for the time being.

It will be best to disregard all evidence of this inconclusive kind, and to confine our attention to those points which really throw light upon the question as to the relative position of actors and chorus during the fifth century. The following facts seem to be established. It is evident that the chorus sometimes entered and sometimes departed through the back-scene. Instances are not very common; there are only about six in the extant dramas<sup>2</sup>. Still, they undoubtedly occur. It is evident, too, that the actors sometimes entered by the orchestra. They must have done so when they entered along with the

<sup>1</sup> Eur. Med. 1275. Cp. Agam. 1344, Cyclops 630, Hipp. 780, Hec. 1042, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Aesch. Choeph. 22, 1063; Eum. 140. Eur. Troad. 176; Hel. 385, 517. In Aristoph. Av. 667 Procne (the flute-

player of the chorus) enters from the back-scene, and then descends into the orchestra. Several other instances are given by Capps, pp. 9, 10; but they are all very doubtful.

chorus, and they probably did so when they entered in chariots or wagons<sup>1</sup>. This gives us about seven instances where the actors came in by the orchestra. They may have done so much more frequently. This is a point which will be considered later on. But these seven cases are the only ones for which there is any convincing evidence. On the other hand, it was a common thing for actors and chorus to depart together through the orchestra. Many plays end in this way, such as the *Eumenides* and the *Septem*. In *Aristophanes* it is a favourite form of conclusion for actors and chorus to go off through the orchestra in a joyful procession<sup>2</sup>. The general result then is this, that it was plainly permissible in the fifth century for the chorus to enter or exit by the back-scene, and for the actors to enter or exit by the orchestra; though the last of these practices is the only one of which there are many certain examples. But when we pass on from these entrances and exits, and look at the rest of the play, we find that it is very unusual, during the course of the action, for the chorus to come on the stage, or for the actors to go into the orchestra. The instances in which, apart from entrances and exits, the actors and the chorus can be shown to have come into close physical contact with one another, are remarkably few. We may mention, as examples, the scene in which the chorus tries to prevent Creon from seizing *Antigone*, or the scene where the farmers mount the stage to draw the statue of Peace out of the well. Opinions may differ as to individual cases, but the total number of instances of this kind does not amount, at the outside, to more than about fifteen<sup>3</sup>. The conclusion we may draw from this evidence is as follows. There was nothing in the fifth century theatre to prevent the actors from moving into the place occupied by the chorus, and there was nothing to prevent the chorus moving into the place occupied by the actors. But, except when they were entering

<sup>1</sup> See below pp. 218, 228.

<sup>2</sup> See below p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> The following instances appear to be certain—*Aesch.* Suppl. 208, 832; *Choeph.* 22 foll. *Soph. Oed. Col.* 826 foll. *Eur. Suppl.* 1, 815; *Hel.* 1627 foll.;

*Rhesus* 681; *Iph. Aul.* 599. *Aristoph.* *Pax* 246 foll. Many other examples will be found in the treatises already mentioned; but the evidence for most of them appears to be very slight.

or leaving the scene of action, they do not appear to have usually done so, but to have kept apart from one another.

What then does all this prove as regards the stage? On the one hand, it proves conclusively that the stage of the fifth century cannot have been as high as the ordinary Hellenistic stage. If the fifth century stage had been twelve feet above the level of the orchestra, there would have been the greatest awkwardness in actors and chorus passing from one place to the other. But, on the other hand, it does not in any way exclude the possibility of there having been a stage of some kind or another. If we suppose that the fifth century stage was lower and deeper than that of later times, and that it was connected with the orchestra by a long flight of steps, or by a sloping ascent, the extant dramas might have been acted on such a stage without the slightest difficulty. Actors and chorus could easily pass from stage to orchestra, and vice versa. The fact that they so seldom came into contact with one another, except when entering or leaving the theatre, is a strong confirmation of the view that there was a stage of some kind, and that it was reserved in most cases for the actors, while the usual place for the chorus was in the orchestra.

The main reason for the employment of a stage must have been to make the actors clearly visible to the audience, and to prevent the view of them being impeded by the chorus in the orchestra. A few feet of elevation would be sufficient to produce this result. Dörpfeld, it is true, denies that any such precaution was necessary. He denies that the actors, even without a stage, would have been hidden from view by the chorus<sup>1</sup>. But if we look at the plan of a Greek theatre, it is clear that if the actors were in the orchestra, and the chorus stood in front of them, the chorus must have obstructed the view of a great many of the spectators. In fact we have ancient testimony to that effect. The tragic chorus stood in three rows. We are told that the worst and most ungainly choristers (the '*laurostatae*,' as they were called) were placed in the middle row, because they were not clearly seen by the

<sup>1</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 353 foll.

spectators<sup>1</sup>. But, however the chorus stood, there could only have been *one* row between these 'laurostatae' and the audience. If, then, the actors had been in the orchestra, with *three* rows of choristers in front of them, the obstruction to the view would obviously have been very much greater. And it is important to remember that the spectators who would have suffered most by this arrangement would have been the occupants of the lowest tiers of seats. But these seats were reserved as seats of honour, and were confined to high officials and distinguished citizens. Hence, if Dörpfeld's theory is correct, the distinction which the Athenians bestowed upon their leading citizens cannot have been one of very much value. The benches which they assigned to them must have been the worst seats for view in the whole theatre.

Dörpfeld further objects that, if we suppose a low stage at Athens in the fifth century, the history of the Greek stage becomes a very fantastic and peculiar affair. We have first a stage of five or six feet, then in the Hellenistic period it rises to about twelve feet, then later on in the Roman period it suddenly drops to five again. His own theory, he says, is much simpler. There was no stage at all till the Roman period, and then a stage of five feet was erected<sup>2</sup>. But the figures given by Dörpfeld are quite fallacious. There was no sudden rise and fall of the kind he describes. We have no means of determining the exact height of the stage during the fifth and fourth centuries. But when we come to the Hellenistic period we find that it was not fixed at twelve feet, but varied from eight to thirteen. There was no settled rule. Architects naturally tried new experiments. Different heights were adopted in different places. Probably there was just the same variety and love of experiment in the fifth and fourth centuries. Again, when we come to the Roman period, we do not find that the height of the stage was suddenly fixed at five feet. In many places it was as much as eight or nine. Wherever we look in the history of the Greek theatre, we perceive a gradual transition from one type of stage to another; and the reasons for the successive changes are

<sup>1</sup> Phot. and Hesych. γ. λαυροστάται.

<sup>2</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 363.

generally to be explained by the varying circumstances of the contemporary drama.

The archaeological evidence on the subject of the early stage has already been discussed<sup>1</sup>. Unfortunately it amounts to very little. The oldest stage-buildings, being made of wood, have disappeared without leaving any trace behind them. However, such evidence as can be obtained tends to confirm the testimony of the dramas themselves, and to show that the stage of the fifth and fourth centuries was lower and deeper than that of subsequent times. There is also this point to be taken into consideration. The existence of a lofty stage during the Hellenistic period appears to be now proved by irresistible testimony. This being so, it is altogether improbable on general grounds that there should have been no stage at all during the two preceding centuries. To suppose that the Greeks began without any stage of any kind, and then after two centuries suddenly erected a stage about twelve feet high, is a most unlikely hypothesis. But if we imagine that a stage existed from the first, and that it was a low one in the fifth century, and was then gradually raised in consequence of the changed character of the drama, the process becomes much more intelligible. The presence of a stage during the later period is strong presumptive evidence in favour of an earlier one.

The last few years have been prolific in new theories on the subject of the stage. Most of them may be regarded as developments or modifications of Dörpfeld's views. Before leaving this subject it may be well to give a brief account of the more important of them. Bethe considers that there can no longer be any doubt as to the existence of the Hellenistic stage. He also agrees that the passages in Aristophanes prove the use of a low stage at the time when Aristophanes wrote. But for the greater part of the fifth century he denies its existence. He considers that the first Greek stage was erected in 427 or in 426, and that this date was an important epoch in the development of the theatre. He founds his belief on the fact that after this date there is no further instance of the use

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 148.



of the ekkyklema, while before this date there is no example of the use of the mechane, the theologeion, and the drop-scene<sup>1</sup>. But, in the first place, it is by no means clear why the presence or absence of these contrivances should involve the existence or non-existence of a stage. In the second place, his dates are open to question. There is no proof, as we shall see later on, that the machinery which he mentions was introduced or discontinued at the time specified. Another theory has been put forward by Weissmann. He, too, accepts the Hellenistic stage, but agrees with Dörpfeld that in the fifth century actors and chorus performed on the same level. However, he thinks that the passages in which old men complain of the steepness of the road prove that there must have been a raised platform which they had to ascend. As one of these passages—that in the *Hercules Furens*—is spoken by the chorus, he comes to the conclusion that there was a large platform for actors and chorus combined. This platform extended from the back-scene over a considerable part of the orchestra, and on it stood the actors and chorus, both on the same level<sup>2</sup>. To this it may be answered, that the evidence on which he relies is far too slight a justification for such a sweeping hypothesis. Also on general grounds it is inconceivable that the Greeks, when they already possessed an orchestra which was admirably adapted for choral performances, should have taken the trouble to erect a huge platform on the top of it. Christ agrees in the main with Weissmann. He accepts the Hellenistic stage for the later period, and also the platform for the chorus in the orchestra during the fifth century. But he thinks the passages in Aristophanes prove that the actors even then stood higher than the chorus. He therefore supposes two stages: one immediately before the back-scene, for the actors; and another larger and lower one in the orchestra, for the use of the chorus<sup>3</sup>. He thus eventually comes round to the same con-

<sup>1</sup> Bethe, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Theaters*, p. 205 foll.

<sup>2</sup> *Scenische Aufführung*, p. 37. *Jahrb. für classische Philologie*, 1895,

p. 673 foll. See above, p. 191.

<sup>3</sup> *Jahrb. für class. Philologie*, 1894, p. 161 foll.

clusion as Wieseler, though by a very different process. His theory, however, is open to the same objections as that of Weissmann. This orchestral platform is utterly improbable in itself, and is unsupported by any sufficient evidence. Lastly, there is Robert's hypothesis. Robert denies the existence of a stage during the fifth century; but supposes that one was erected in the course of the fourth century for the performance of new plays, in which there was practically no chorus. Henceforth new plays were acted on the stage, old plays in front of it, in the orchestra<sup>1</sup>. But it is impossible to suppose that in the same theatre, and at the same festival, the proscenium should have served at one time as a stage, and at another time as a background. Nor is there anything in the ancient authorities to support such a view.

### § 13. *Various Details.*

To return to the subject of the construction of the theatre in general. It is obvious that, considering the enormous size of the building, and the immense numbers of spectators which it was intended to accommodate, the greatest attention must have been bestowed upon its acoustic properties. Vitruvius is most emphatic upon the necessity of keeping this object in view, when choosing a site for a theatre. The situation against the side of a hill, and the gentle and symmetrical upward slope of the tiers of seats, are mentioned as qualities by which acoustic excellence was ensured. The height of the stage-buildings was also of great importance. It was found that the best results were obtained by making them exactly the same height as the uppermost parts of the auditorium<sup>2</sup>. That this was the ordinary practice during the Roman period is proved by the remains of various theatres, such as those of Aspendos and Orange. But whether, at any time during the Greek period, stage-buildings were constructed on this enormous scale, is very doubtful. Another matter on which the ancient architects insisted was the wooden flooring of the

<sup>1</sup> Hermes, 1897, p. 450 foll.

<sup>2</sup> Vitruv. v. 6.

stage, which tended to make the voices of the actors more audible. When Alexander the Great wished to have a stage built entirely of bronze, it was pointed out to him that this material would be fatal from the acoustic point of view<sup>1</sup>. Vitruvius mentions a peculiar practice which was adopted for the purpose of adding resonance to the voices of the actors. Hollow vessels of bronze, of different tones, were suspended in niches in various parts of the auditorium. When a sound was uttered of the same tone as that of any of the vessels, its resonance was increased. He states that this custom, though not adopted in Rome, existed in many Greek and Italian theatres; and that Mummius, after his capture of Corinth, brought back several of these vessels from the theatre there<sup>2</sup>. In the remains of the existing theatres no traces are to be found of the niches he describes. It is probable that the whole plan was merely an experiment adopted in a few special cases. As far as Athens was concerned, no such extraneous assistance to the voice was necessary. Experiments at the present day have shown that the acoustic properties of the theatre of Dionysus are excellent; and this must have been still more the case when the stage-buildings were standing. Probably therefore, in spite of the vast numbers of the audience, the persons in the back rows could hear the words spoken in the orchestra and upon the stage much more clearly than might at first have been supposed.

Another point mentioned by Vitruvius in connexion with the theatre is the advantage of erecting porticoes in the rear of the stage-buildings, to serve as a shelter for the people in case of a sudden shower of rain, and also for the convenience of the choregi. He adds that at Athens there were three buildings close to the theatre, which served admirably for this purpose. These were the Odeion, the temple of Dionysus, and the Portico of Eumenes<sup>3</sup>. The Odeion here referred to was that built by Pericles, which probably stood on the eastern side of the theatre, though its exact site has

<sup>1</sup> Plut., *Non posse suaviter*, &c., 1096 B.

<sup>2</sup> Vitruv. v. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Id. v. 9.

not yet been determined with certainty<sup>1</sup>. The temple of Dionysus mentioned by Vitruvius is apparently the older of the two temples, marked *t* in the plan, and lying to the south-west of the stage-buildings. The Portico of Eumenes is supposed to have been built by Eumenes II, in the beginning of the second century, and it is thought that traces of it are to be found stretching westwards from the theatre<sup>2</sup>. Immediately to the south of the stage-buildings are the foundations of a long rectangular erection, belonging to the same date as the stage-buildings themselves, and marked *s* in the plan. This erection was no doubt a portico, built in the fourth century for the purpose described by Vitruvius. In the theatre itself there was no protection for the general mass of the people either from the sun or from the rain. The huge canvas awnings, suspended upon masts, which the Latin writers refer to, were an invention of the Italians, and were only adopted in Greek theatres at a very late period<sup>3</sup>.

The interior of the theatre at Athens was decorated with the statues of various public persons, some distinguished, others not. In the time of Lycurgus bronze statues were erected in honour of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides<sup>4</sup>. Pausanias mentions that in his time there were several statues of dramatic poets in the theatre, but, with the exception of Sophocles, Euripides, and Menander, they were all very obscure individuals<sup>5</sup>. The basis of Menander's statue, with an inscription recording his name and the name of the sculptor, has been discovered near the western parodos. Its original site, however, is unknown<sup>6</sup>. Astydamas, the tragic poet, was voted a statue in the theatre on account of the excellence of his tragedy called Parthenopaeus. He wrote an epigram to be inscribed upon the base, regretting that he had not been born in the time of the great tragic writers, so as to be able to compete with worthy antagonists. The Athenians were so disgusted

<sup>1</sup> Plut. Pericles, 160 A. Pausan. i. 14. I. See Harrison and Verrall, *Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens*, p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> Harrison and Verrall, p. 263.

<sup>3</sup> Val. Max. ii. 4. 6. Corp. Ins. Gr. 4283.

<sup>4</sup> Plut. X. orat. 841 F.

<sup>5</sup> Pausan. i. 21. I.

<sup>6</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 71.

with his conceit, that they refused to allow the epigram to be inscribed, and the expression, 'to praise one's self like Astydamos,' passed into a proverb<sup>1</sup>. The statue of Astydamos originally stood at the inside corner of the auditorium on the western side, and there was probably a corresponding statue on the eastern side<sup>2</sup>. One of the grammarians says that there were also statues of Themistocles and Miltiades in the theatre, each with a captured Persian standing beside him. But his statement is probably a fiction, invented to explain the passage on which he was commenting, and which he misunderstood<sup>3</sup>. In later times it is stated that a statue of Eurycleides the conjuror was erected in the theatre<sup>4</sup>. It is probable that during the reign of Hadrian thirteen statues of him were placed in the thirteen different blocks of the auditorium. The inscriptions on the bases of four of these statues have been found in the existing remains of the theatre<sup>5</sup>. In addition to the statues, various votive offerings were erected in the two side-entrances. Many of the bases were still in their original position, when the theatre was first excavated, but they have now mostly disappeared. Four of them, however, still remain. One of them supported the memorial erected by Xenocles in 306, to commemorate his services as Agonothetes. The other three belong to the Roman period<sup>6</sup>. There were also various inscriptions and tablets connected with theatrical affairs. A copy of the decree of the Amphictyonic Council, conferring certain privileges upon the Athenian actors, was inscribed on stone and put up in the theatre<sup>7</sup>. Numerous records of dramatic and dithyrambic contests were erected either in the theatre, or in the immediate neighbourhood. There were lists of the victors in all the competitions at the Lenaea and the City Dionysia. There were lists of all the

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. *σαυτήν ἐπαυεῖς*.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Aristid. iii. p. 535, Dindf. So Wilamowitz, *Aristoteles und Athen*, i. p. 263. Christ, however (*Sitzungsber. Akad. der Wissen.*, 1894, p. 3) thinks the statement about the statues is true, though the scholiast was mis-

taken in applying it to the passage in Aristides.

<sup>4</sup> Athen. p. 19 E.

<sup>5</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iii. 469.

<sup>6</sup> Griech. Theater, p. 70. For the inscription on the Xenocles monument see Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 1289.

<sup>7</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 551.

tragedies and comedies ever produced in the theatre at Athens. There were lists of all the poets and actors who had competed there, with the number of their victories appended to each name. A complete account of these various records has already been given at the end of the first chapter.

Before concluding this description of the theatre of Dionysus it may be interesting to give some account of the various other purposes for which it was used at different times, in addition to its primary object as a place for dramatic representations. From the earliest period the contests between the dithyrambic choruses were held in the theatre. The recitations of the rhapsodists, and the competitions between the harp-players, were also transferred to the same place from the Odeion, in which they had been held previously<sup>1</sup>. Besides this, various ceremonies unconnected with art took place in the theatre during the festivals of Dionysus. The large audiences attracted by the dramatic performances at the City Dionysia made it a suitable occasion for displays of various kinds. It was in the theatre at the City Dionysia that the orphan sons of soldiers, after being educated by the state, were publicly paraded, before being dismissed from state control. On the same occasion the tribute collected from the allies was exhibited in the orchestra, as a proof of the power and magnificence of the Athenian empire. When crowns were bestowed upon deserving citizens, it was a special mark of honour for the fact to be proclaimed in the theatre at the City Dionysia<sup>2</sup>. The annual cock-fight in commemoration of the Persian invasion was held in the theatre<sup>3</sup>. But the most important of the non-dramatic purposes for which the theatre came to be used was that of a meeting-place for the assemblies of the people. In the fifth and fourth centuries the regular place of assembly was the Pnyx. But already at a very early period special assemblies used to be held in the theatre after each festival of Dionysus,

<sup>1</sup> Hesych. v. *φῶδελον*.

<sup>2</sup> See chap. ii. p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> Aelian. Var. Hist. ii. 28. On the outside of the arms, in the throne of the priest of Dionysus, there are two bas-

reliefs, in which kneeling Cupids are depicted in the act of setting cocks to fight. The significance of the reliefs is explained by the fact that the annual cock-fight was held in the theatre.

to discuss matters connected with the festival<sup>1</sup>. These semi-religious meetings probably paved the way for the later practice of holding ordinary meetings there. As early as the year 411, on the occasion of the overthrow of the Four Hundred, Thucydides mentions that an assembly of the people was held in the theatre<sup>2</sup>. It was in the theatre that the meeting was convened which condemned Phocion and his friends to death in 317 B.C.<sup>3</sup>. In 295 Demetrius, after capturing the city, summoned a gathering of the people in the theatre<sup>4</sup>. These meetings were all of a special character, and were not regular assemblies of the people; but they served as precedents for the use of the theatre for political, as opposed to religious and artistic, purposes. Similarly, we are told on the authority of Aristotle that the Ephebi received their shields and spears from the state at assemblies of the people in the theatre<sup>5</sup>. After the middle of the third century the theatre became the regular meeting-place. The Pnyx henceforward was only used for assemblies for the election of magistrates<sup>6</sup>. In this later period the theatre was also used for various exhibitions which seemed unworthy of its character as a temple of Dionysus. Sword-swallowers, conjurors, and exhibitors of puppet-shows are mentioned among the entertainers who occupied the stage which had formerly been dignified by Euripides<sup>7</sup>. But the greatest degradation which the theatre at Athens ever suffered was when, under the influence of Roman custom, it was given up to gladiatorial combats. This was a pollution which called forth indignant protests from writers such as Philostratus and Dion Chrysostom<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Dem. Meid. § 9.

<sup>2</sup> Thuc. viii. 93, 94.

<sup>3</sup> Plut. Phoc. 757 D.

<sup>4</sup> Id. Demetr. 905 A. Müller (*Bühnenalt.* p. 74) is mistaken in stating, on the authority of Diod. xvi. 84, that on the news of the capture of Elatea in 339 the Athenians hastily assembled in the theatre. That they met in the Pnyx is proved by the passage in Dem.

de Cor. § 169. Diodorus is merely using the language of his own time, when the theatre was the regular meeting-place.

<sup>5</sup> Harpocrat. v. *περίπολος*.

<sup>6</sup> Poll. viii. 132.

<sup>7</sup> Plut. Lycurg. 51 E. Athen. 19 E. Alciphron iii. 20.

<sup>8</sup> Dion Chrysost. or. xxxi. p. 386 (Dindf.). Philostrat. vit. Apoll. iv. 22.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SCENERY

#### § 1. *General Character of the Scenery.*

THE scenery in use upon the Attic stage was simple in character and limited in amount, compared with that employed in a modern theatre. Elaborate set-pieces and gorgeous spectacular effects were unknown. The principal expense in the production of a play was the training of the chorus, the payment of the actors, and the supply of suitable dresses. The scenery was never made the prominent feature of the exhibition. All that was required was an appropriate background to show off to advantage the figures of the performers. The simplicity in the character of the ancient scenery was a necessary result of the peculiar construction of the stage. The Attic stage, though from sixty to seventy feet long, was apparently never more than about fifteen feet in depth, and was still further contracted in after times. On a long and narrow platform of this kind, any representation of the interior of a building would be out of the question. All those elaborate spectacular illusions, which are rendered practicable by the great depth of the modern stage, were impossible in an ancient theatre. Nothing more was required than to cover over the wall at the back with a suitable view. Then again, in addition to the simplicity of the mechanical arrangements, the number of scenes in use upon the Attic stage was very limited in amount. Not only was a change of scene in the course of the same play practically unknown, but there was often very



little difference between one play and another as regards the character of the scenery required. Each of the three great branches of the drama had a background of a conventional type, specially appropriated to itself, and this typical background was the one usually adopted. When therefore a series of tragedies was being exhibited, or a series of comedies, it must often have happened that the same scenery would do duty for several plays in succession. Thus the question of the scenery was one of the smallest of the difficulties which the Attic stage-manager had to contend with. Little variety was necessary, and the mechanical arrangements were simple in the extreme.

The use of painted scenery, natural as it appears to us, was only invented very gradually by the Athenians. During the earliest period of the drama the background consisted merely of a small platform for the actor, with a wooden booth behind for him to change his dress in. As the number of the actors increased, the booth and platform developed in proportion, until they assumed the shape which is familiar to us from the remains of the later stage-buildings. But for a long time the erection at the back of the stage continued to retain its original character. It was regarded, not as a back-scene, but merely as a retiring-place for the actors. The notion of covering it over with painted scenery, in such a way as to make it represent the supposed scene of action in the play, was a development of comparatively late times. The old drama had no scenic background. The action was supposed to take place in some open region; the decorations were confined to such properties as could be put up on the stage; the wooden hoarding in the rear was nothing more than the front of the actors' room. Things were still in this primitive condition when Aeschylus wrote his four earlier plays. The progress of the art of scenic decoration can be traced very distinctly by comparing these plays with his later tragedies. In the first four there is no mention of any scenery, no clear definition of the exact spot where the action is taking place. The scenic appliances are limited to properties erected in front of the

hoarding. In the *Supplices* the scene is laid in an open district at some distance from the city. In the centre is an altar of the gods, at which the suppliants take refuge<sup>1</sup>. Otherwise there is a total absence of local colouring. In the *Persae*, the next in order of his plays, the action is also laid at a distance from the palace. The only object mentioned as actually in sight is the tomb of Darius<sup>2</sup>. In the *Septem* the performers are gathered together within the walls of Thebes beside an altar on some rising ground, from which the towers of the city are visible<sup>3</sup>. But there is no clear definition of the scene, and no mention of any palace or other building from which the actors make their entrance. In the *Prometheus* the action takes place in a rocky region of Scythia. But in all probability the cliff to which Prometheus is chained was merely built up upon the stage. There is nothing in the play to suggest an elaborate representation of the view. In these four plays the background was still a bare wall with doors for the actors. It had no scenic significance. But when we come to the *Oresteia*, the last dramatic production of Aeschylus, a great change is noticeable. The scene is now laid in front of a building which is clearly defined and frequently referred to. In the first two tragedies it is the palace of Agamemnon at Argos; in the third it is the temple of Apollo at Delphi, and later on the temple of Athene at Athens<sup>4</sup>. The contrast between these plays and the earlier ones, as regards local colour and allusions to the scene of action, is very marked and conspicuous, and denotes a considerable advance in the art of mounting a play. The old actors' booth had now become a regular scenic background<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Aesch. *Suppl.* 189.

<sup>2</sup> Pers. 659. The palace is often referred to (159, 230, 524, 849, 1038); but this does not show that it was supposed to be visible. And the fact that Atossa made her first entrance on a chariot (159, 607), though coming from the palace, seems to prove that it was out of sight.

<sup>3</sup> *Septem* 95, 240, 265, 549, 823.

<sup>4</sup> *Agam.* 3, *Choeph.* 22, *Eum.* 35, 242.

<sup>5</sup> Reisch (*Griech. Theater*, pp. 194, 200) thinks the actors' booth was originally in the side-entrance to the orchestra. He thinks the first stage-buildings were erected about 465, when scenery was introduced; and that these buildings were henceforth used for actors' rooms. But it is much simpler

The bare hoarding was covered with painting, to represent a palace, or a temple, or whatever else might be required. This conclusion, which may be deduced from the extant dramas themselves, is confirmed by the ancient traditions as to the introduction of scene-painting. Aristotle says it was invented by Sophocles; Vitruvius apparently ascribes it to Aeschylus<sup>1</sup>. Whichever statement be correct, it is clear, from the fact of its being attributed to both poets, that it must have been introduced at that particular period when both were exhibiting upon the stage. It cannot be placed earlier than the first appearance of Sophocles in 468, or later than the last appearance of Aeschylus in 458. Moreover Sophocles, if he really invented it, is not likely to have done so immediately on his first appearance. The most probable date, therefore, is some period not very long before the production of the *Oresteia*, and subsequent to the production of the four early plays of Aeschylus.

By the middle of the fifth century, then, we may regard the use of painted scenery as fully established. Taking this date as our starting-point, it will be interesting to consider the question as to the number and character of the scenes most in use upon the Attic stage. Our principal authority will be the Greek plays still in existence. Vitruvius divides scenery into three classes—tragic, comic, and satyric. According to his description, the salient features in a tragic scene were columns, pediments, statues, and other signs of regal magnificence. In comedy the scene represented a private house, with projecting balconies, and windows looking out upon the stage. The scenery in the satyric drama consisted of a rustic region, with trees, caverns, mountains, and other objects of the same

to suppose that the actors' booth stood fronting the spectators from the first, and that it was gradually converted into a stage-building.

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. Poet. c. 4 τρεῖς δὲ καὶ σκηνογραφίαν Σοφοκλῆς. Vitruv. vii. praef. § 11 primum Agatharchus Athenis Aeschylō docente tragoediam scaenam

fecit et de ea commentarium reliquit. Prof. Jebb (Dict. Antiq. ii. p. 816) thinks the two statements may be reconciled by supposing that the words 'Aeschylō docente tragoediam' merely fix the date, without implying that Aeschylus had anything to do with the innovation.

kind<sup>1</sup>. The above list is not intended to be an exhaustive one. It merely describes in general outline the type of scene which was most characteristic of each of the three great branches of the drama. At the same time, it is more exhaustive than might at first sight be supposed. If the extant Greek dramas are examined, it will be found that in the great majority of cases the scenery conforms to the general type described by Vitruvius. To take the tragic poets first. Twenty-five tragedies by Sophocles and Euripides have been preserved. In no less than seventeen out of the twenty-five the scene is laid in front of a palace or temple<sup>2</sup>. In all these cases the general character of the scenery would be exactly such as Vitruvius describes. The prominent feature would be a magnificent building, with columns, pediments, and statues. Of the remaining eight tragedies, there are four in which the scene consists of an encampment, with tents in the background<sup>3</sup>. The other four all require special scenery. In the *Philoctetes* the scene is laid in front of a cavern in a desert island. In the *Ajax* it is laid partly before the tent of Ajax, partly in a solitary quarter by the sea-shore. The background in the *Oedipus Coloneus* consists of a country region, with the sacred enclosure of the *Eumenides* in the centre. Finally, the *Electra* of Euripides is altogether exceptional in having its scene laid before a humble country cottage. On the whole, the evidence of the extant tragedies tends to confirm the statement of Vitruvius, and exemplifies the conventional character of Greek tragic scenery. In the great majority of instances the background would be an imposing pile of buildings, adorned with various architectural embellishments. As to the satyric drama, the *Cyclops* of Euripides is the only specimen of this class of composition which has been preserved. The scene there corresponds exactly to the descriptions of Vitruvius, and consists of a country region, with the cave of Polyphemus in

<sup>1</sup> Vitruv. v. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Viz. *Soph. O. R., Antig., Electr., Trach.; Eur. Alc., Med., Hipp., Herc. Fur., Phoen., Hel., Orest., Bacch., Ion,*

*Iph. Taur., Andr., Suppl., Heraclid.*

<sup>3</sup> Viz. *Eur. Hec., Troad., Iph. Aul., Rhesus.*

the centre. There can be little doubt that in most satyric dramas the background was of much the same character. As the chorus always consisted of satyrs, whose dwelling was in the forest, the scene of the play would naturally be laid in some deserted country district. In regard to comedy, it is necessary to distinguish between the Old Comedy and the New. The scene in the New Comedy was almost invariably laid in front of an ordinary private house, as is proved by the adaptations of Plautus and Terence. In the Old Comedy, to judge from the extant plays of Aristophanes, the same was generally the case. In six out of the eleven comedies of Aristophanes, the background consists merely of a house, or of houses standing side by side<sup>1</sup>. In four others the principal part of the action takes place before a house. In the *Thesmophoriazusae* the scene consists of a house and a temple standing side by side. In the *Lysistrata* there is a private house, and near it the entrance to the Acropolis. In the *Acharnians* the opening scene takes place in the *Pnyx*; the rest of the action is carried on before the houses of *Dicaeopolis*, *Euripides*, and *Lamachus*. The scene in the *Knights* is laid partly before the house of *Demos*, and partly in the *Pnyx*. The only comedy in which the scenery is of an altogether exceptional character is the *Birds*, in which the background consists of a wild country region, filled with rocks, and trees, and bushes. It appears, therefore, that even in the Old Comedy there was not much variety in the scenery.

As regards the style of the ancient scene-painting, and the degree of perfection to which it was eventually brought, it is difficult to speak with any certainty. But in the fifth century, at any rate, there can be little doubt that the scenery was of the simplest description, and not in any way comparable to that of modern times. Landscape-painting in the fifth century was still in its infancy, and altogether subordinated to the painting of the human figure. When landscapes were introduced into a picture, they were suggested rather than worked out in detail. A city was represented by a few houses, a forest

<sup>1</sup> Viz. the *Wasps*, *Peace*, *Clouds*, *Frogs*, *Ecclesiazusae*, *Plutus*.

by a few trees, and so on. The paintings for the stage were probably of the same general type. The scenes most in use were front views of temples, palaces, and dwelling-houses. In such cases a rough indication of the different buildings would be considered sufficient. That they were depicted with any completeness and realism is far from likely. It is true that the personages in the extant dramas often use words which seem to imply an elaborate architectural background. They speak of columns, triglyphs, cornices, and pediments<sup>1</sup>. In the *Ion* they even admire in detail the bas-reliefs with which the temple front was decorated<sup>2</sup>. But it is unnecessary to assume, in passages of this kind, that the objects mentioned were all of them actually represented upon the stage. Many of them may have been left to the imagination. As for natural scenery, there was probably very little of this in the early theatre. If the action was laid in a country region, as in the *Philoctetes* and the *Oedipus Coloneus*, and in the generality of satyric plays, the necessary effect might be produced by a few rocks, and trees, and other similar objects. In later times it was customary, when the background represented a palace or temple, to insert a landscape on either side<sup>3</sup>. Even in the plays of the fifth century there are occasional references to such landscapes. Helen, standing before the palace of the Egyptian king, points to the 'streams of the Nile' as flowing close by. The old man in the *Electra*, when he reaches the palace of the *Atreidae*, shows *Orestes* the country round about, with *Argos* and *Mycenae* in the distance. The Trojan captives descry, from the Greek encampment, the smoke and flames of burning *Troy*<sup>4</sup>. But here again we may doubt whether, on the contemporary stage, these places were really visible to the spectators. At any rate, if they were delineated at all, it was probably in a slight and symbolical fashion. As time went on the art of scenic decoration was much improved and elaborated.

<sup>1</sup> *Bacch.* 590, 1211; *Orest.* 1569; *periaktoi*, *Poll.* iv. 126, 131. See below, *Iph. Taur.* 113, 130. P. 225.

<sup>2</sup> *Ion* 190 foll.

<sup>3</sup> Such scenes were depicted on the *Eur. Hel.* 1, *Troad.* 1256; *Soph. El.* 4 foll.

In the Hellenistic period it seems to have reached a fairly high degree of development. The laws of perspective were carefully studied, and treatises were written to show how the effect of gradations of distance might be produced on a flat surface<sup>1</sup>. Natural phenomena were now depicted with more realism. Seas and rivers, earth and sky, are mentioned among the objects delineated. Even regions in Hades and Tartarus were represented upon the stage<sup>2</sup>. The progress of landscape-painting in general among the later Greeks naturally produced its effect upon the work of the scenic artists. But it would be an anachronism to attribute efforts of this ambitious kind to the contemporaries of Sophocles and Euripides.

It appears, then, that in the theatre of the fifth century the scenic background was not a very prominent object. The attention was concentrated mainly on the figures of the performers. It was just the same on the Elizabethan stage, where the back-scene consisted merely of a bare wall, and anything in the way of spectacular effect was provided by the movements and groupings of the actors. The introduction of magnificent decorations appears to be always a later development in the history of the drama. To produce an impression by means of this kind would have been alien to the taste of the Athenians of the fifth century. In the dramatic performances of that period the conspicuous feature was the chorus in the foreground, with its graceful arrangement and picturesque dresses. Above the chorus, on the narrow stage, stood the actors and mute figures, arranged in line, and dressed in brilliant colours. The long scene in the rear was so far decorated as to form a pleasing background, and show off the persons of the actors to advantage. But no attempt was

<sup>1</sup> Vitruv. vii. prae. § 11. Vitruvius says the first impulse to this study was given by Agatharchus, the contemporary of Aeschylus. But he is probably mistaken in attributing, as he appears to do, a knowledge of the laws of perspective to the painters of the fifth century.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 131 καταβλήματα . . .

κατεβάλλετο ἐπὶ τὰς περιήκτους ὁρος δεικνύντα ἢ θάλατταν ἢ ποταμὸν ἢ ἕλλο τι τοιοῦτον. Anon. de comoe. (xx. 28 Dübner) πολυτελέσι δαπάναις κατεσκευά-  
ζετο ἡ σκηνή . . . πεποικιλμένη παρα-  
πετάσμασι καὶ ὀθόνας λευκαῖς καὶ μελαί-  
ναις . . . εἰς τύπον θαλάσσης ταρτάρου  
ᾗδον . . . γῆς καὶ οὐρανοῦ κ.τ.λ.

made to produce a realistic landscape, or to convey the ideas of depth and distance. In its general effect the scene upon the stage resembled a long frieze or bas-relief, with the figures painted in brilliant colours, rather than a picture with a distant perspective.

## § 2. *Mechanical Arrangements for the Scenery.*

The scenery consisted of painted curtains or boards, attached to the wall at the back of the stage<sup>1</sup>. As the mechanical arrangements for fixing them up have not been described by any of the ancient writers, a detailed account of the matter is impossible. But some facts can be deduced from the testimony of the existing dramas. In every Greek play the action was supposed to take place in the open air. The scene was generally laid before some building or tent, or in a country district with a rock or cavern in the background. The upper portion of the painted scene represented merely the sky, and was probably the same in all dramas. The lower portion delineated the building or landscape which the particular play required. It used to be commonly supposed that this lower portion projected two or three feet in front of the upper; that the back-scene was not a flat surface from top to bottom, but that a narrow ledge or platform ran across from wing to wing about halfway up<sup>2</sup>. The object of this hypothesis was to provide room for the 'distegia.' The distegia was a contrivance which enabled actors to take their stand upon the roof of a palace or private house<sup>3</sup>. Eight or nine instances of its use are to be found in the existing Greek plays. Thus the Agamemnon of Aeschylus opens with the watchman sitting

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 131 καταβλήματα δὲ ὑφάσματα ἢ πίνακες ἦσαν ἔχοντες γραφὰς τῇ χρεῖα τῶν δραμάτων προσφόρους· κατεβάλλετο δὲ ἐπὶ τὰς περιάκτους. Ibid. 125 κλίσιον . . . παραπετάσμασιν δηλούμενον. Suid. v. προσκήνιον τὸ πρὸ τῆς σκηνῆς παραπίτασμα. Anon. de comoed. (xx. 28 Dübner) σκηνῇ πεποικιλμένη παραπετάσμασι καὶ ὀδοῖναι.

<sup>2</sup> So Müller, Bühnenalt. pp. 118, 142.

<sup>3</sup> Poll. iv. 129 ἡ δὲ distegia ποτὲ μὲν ἐν οἴκῳ βασιλείῳ διήρως δωμάτιον, οἶον ἀφ' οὗ ἐν Φοινίσσαις ἡ Ἀντιγόνη βλέπει τὸν στρατὸν, ποτὲ δὲ καὶ κέραμος, ἀφ' οὗ βάλλουσι τῷ κεράμῳ ἐν δὲ κωμῳδίᾳ ἀπὸ τῆς distegias πορνοβοσκοὶ τι κατασπεύουσιν ἢ γράδια ἢ γύναια καταβλέπει.



upon the roof of the palace at Argos, and waiting for the beacon's signal. In the *Phoenissae* of Euripides Antigone and the attendant mount upon the roof to get a view of the army encamped outside the city. In the concluding scene of the *Orestes* Hermione, Orestes, and Pylades are seen standing upon the roof of the palace. Examples also occur in comedy. In the *Acharnians* the wife of Dicaeopolis views the procession from the roof of the house. At the commencement of the *Wasps* Bdelycleon is seen sleeping upon the roof, and later on his father Philocleon tries to escape through the chimney. At the end of the *Clouds* Strepsiades climbs up a ladder to the roof of the phrontisterion, in order to set it on fire. In the *Lysistrata* Myrrhina and Lysistrata are seen upon the battlements of the Acropolis. The distegia may also have been used in that scene of the *Supplices*, where Evadne appears upon the summit of a cliff, and then flings herself down<sup>1</sup>. In all these cases it used to be imagined that the standing-room for the actor was provided in the way described; that the lower part of the scene projected two or three feet, and so furnished a permanent platform in the background. But this theory is improbable on several grounds. We have seen that the distegia was only employed in comparatively few instances. It seems unlikely, therefore, that an elaborate structure of this kind should have been erected merely to meet these occasional requirements. Further than this, if the scene had been divided in half by a horizontal line, and the lower half had protruded several feet, this arrangement, though suitable enough when the background was a palace, would have been absurdly inappropriate when a country district was to be represented. It is also questionable whether the ancient stage was wide enough to permit the arrangement. It may have been possible in early times; but the Vitruvian stage, which was only ten feet across, can hardly have been encroached upon to the extent of two or three feet. It is far more probable that the back-scene was flat from top to bottom. This

<sup>1</sup> *Agam.* 3, *Phoen.* 89, *Orest.* 1567-1575, *Acharn.* 262, *Vesp.* 68 and 144, *Nub.* 1485-1503, *Lysist.* 864, 874, and 883, *Eur. Suppl.* 990.

supposition is more in harmony with the simple style of the ancient scenery. As for the *distegia*, it was provided most likely by a projecting balcony or upper story, which might be introduced when required, without encroaching upon the narrow stage. Such balconies were not uncommon in Greek and Roman houses<sup>1</sup>. And that they were used in the theatre is expressly stated by Vitruvius, who tells us that the houses in comedy were of the type called '*Maeniana*,' or houses with projecting galleries<sup>2</sup>. In ordinary cases the *distegia* would resemble a structure of this kind. But where the surroundings were exceptional, as in the *Lysistrata*, it might easily be decorated in such a way as to conform to the rest of the scenery.

If the scene represented a dwelling-house, there were windows in the upper story, out of which the characters could peer upon the stage. Such windows are mentioned by Vitruvius, and instances of their use occur in the extant comedies. For example, Philocleon, in the *Wasps*, tries to escape out of an upper window, and in the *Ecclesiazusae* the old woman and the young girl are seen looking out of one<sup>3</sup>. It need hardly be remarked that the doors of the building represented by the painted scenery would correspond more or less closely with the permanent doors in the back-wall, so as to admit of easy ingress and egress to the actors. In the same way, if the scene was a cavern in a country region, the entrance to the cavern would be made to correspond with the central door in the wall at the back. Concerning the manner in which the scenery was finished off at the top nothing can be laid down for certain. It is not even known whether the stage was covered with a roof or not. But the analogy of Roman theatres, and the general convenience of the arrangement, are in favour of such a covering<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Dict. Antiq. i. pp. 663, 666.

<sup>2</sup> Vitruv. v. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Vitruv. v. 6. Vesp. 379, Eccles. 924, 930, 961-963.

<sup>4</sup> See above, pp. 147, 159.

§ 3. *The Entrances to the Stage.*

The question as to the number and the character of the entrances leading upon the stage is of some importance in connexion with the Greek drama. In order to avoid confusion in dealing with this subject, it is necessary to carefully distinguish between the permanent doors in the walls surrounding the stage, and the temporary doors or entrances which were left when the scenery had been put up. First, as to the permanent doors. We have shown already that the remains of the purely Greek theatres are so defective, that it is impossible, from the evidence which they supply, to come to any conclusion as to the number of these doors. But it is evident, from the statements of Pollux, that the Hellenistic type of theatre, which is the one he describes, must have possessed at least five such doors. It must have had three doors in the wall at the back of the stage, and two doors at the sides, one leading from each of the wings. Probably the same plan was adopted in the old wooden buildings of the fourth and fifth centuries. In later times, when the Graeco-Roman theatres were erected, the stage was considerably lengthened, and in consequence the number of the doors in the wall at the back was raised to five. But it has been pointed out in the last chapter that in all probability only three of these doors were used in the course of the actual performances, and that the two outer ones were either covered over by the scenery, or concealed by temporary side-wings of wood<sup>1</sup>.

The next point to be considered is the number of the entrances which had to be provided when the scenery was erected, and the stage was made ready for a dramatic performance. Pollux and Vitruvius, in speaking of the scenery and stage decorations, agree in saying that there were three doors at the back of the stage<sup>2</sup>. But this statement is much too universal. In the majority of cases, no doubt, there were three such doors. When the scene represented a palace, or

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 124, 126; Vitruv. v. 6.

temple, or dwelling-house, three doors appear to have been always used. But when the scene was of an exceptional character, the number of the entrances from the back of the stage would vary according to the requirements of the play. For instance, in the *Philoctetes* there would only be a single entrance, that from the cavern. In the first part of the *Ajax* the only entrance would be that leading out of the tent; in the second part there would be no entrance at all, the background consisting merely of a solitary region by the sea-shore. In the *Cyclops*, the only opening at the back of the stage was the mouth of Polyphemus' cave. In such plays as the *Prometheus* of Aeschylus, and the *Andromeda* of Euripides, the background consisted of rocks and cliffs, and there was no entrance from that quarter. It is clear, therefore, that the statement that a Greek scene was provided with three doors or entrances at the back is not universally true, but only applies to the majority of cases.

Some details concerning the character of the three doors may be gathered from the statements in Pollux and Vitruvius<sup>1</sup>. When the scene was a palace, the central door was decorated with regal grandeur. The side-doors were supposed to lead to the guest-chambers. Occasionally one of the side-doors led to a guest-chamber, the other to a slaves' prison. In comedy, the character and arrangement of the doors would vary considerably, according as the scene was laid in front of one, or two, or three dwelling-houses. In the last case, of which an example is supplied by the *Acharnians*, there would be one door for each of the three houses. Sometimes one of the side-doors represented the way into an outhouse,

<sup>1</sup> Vitruv. v. 6 'ipsae autem scaenae suas habent rationes explicatas ita uti mediae valvae ornatus habeant aulae regiae, dextra ac sinistra hospitalia.' Poll. iv. 124 τριῶν δὲ τῶν κατὰ τὴν σκηνὴν θυρῶν ἡ μέση μὲν βασιλείου ἡ σπῆλαιον ἡ οἶκος ἐνδοξος ἡ πᾶν τοῦ πρωταγωνιστοῦ τοῦ δράματος, ἡ δὲ δεξιὰ τοῦ δευτεραγωνιστοῦ καταγῶγιον· ἡ δὲ ἀριστερὰ τὸ εὐτελέστατον ἔχει πρόσ-

ωπον ἡ ἱερὸν ἐξηρημαμένον, ἡ ἀοικὸς ἐστίν. ἐν δὲ τραγῳδίᾳ ἡ μὲν δεξιὰ θύρα ξενῶν ἐστίν, εἰρικτὴ δὲ ἡ λαία. τὸ δὲ κλισίον ἐν κωμῳδίᾳ παράκειται παρὰ τὴν οἰκίαν, παραπετάσμασι δηλούμενον, καὶ ἐστὶ μὲν σταθμὸς ὑποζυγίων . . . ἐν δὲ Ἀντιφάνους Ἀκαστρίᾳ καὶ ἐργαστήριον γέγονεν. Throughout this passage Pollux is guilty of his usual fault of converting particular cases into general rules.

or workshop, or stable. Sometimes it led into a temple, as in the Thesmophoriazusae. In comedy, no doubt, there was much greater diversity as to scenic details than in tragedy.

A curious regulation concerning the usage of these three doors is mentioned by Pollux<sup>1</sup>. He says that the central door was reserved for the principal character, the door to the right for the secondary characters, the door to the left for those of least significance. It is plain that this statement must be taken with very considerable deductions. In the first place, it only applies to tragedy, and only to those plays in which the background represented a palace or similar building. Even then it cannot have been by any means universal. In fact it only applies to dramas of the type of the Oedipus Tyrannus, in which the principal character is at the same time a person of the highest rank. In such cases it is very likely that his rule about the doors was observed. It would be in harmony with the statuesque and conventional character of Greek tragedy. But there are many plays in which it would be absurd to suppose that any such regulation was adopted. For instance, in the Antigone it can hardly be imagined that the tyrant Creon entered only by a side-door, while the central door, with its regal splendour, was reserved for the oppressed heroine Antigone. Similarly, in the Electra, it is ridiculous to suppose that Clytaemnestra entered from the inferior part of the palace, Electra from the more magnificent. There can be no doubt that Pollux, in his statement about the doors, has been following his favourite practice, and has made a general rule out of a few special instances.

The openings at the back of the stage always led out of some building, tent, cavern, or other dwelling-place. They could only therefore be used by persons who were supposed to be inside the dwelling-place. People coming from the neighbourhood, or from a distance, had to enter the stage in a different way. For this purpose doors in the side-wings were provided<sup>2</sup>. The subject of these side-entrances on to

<sup>1</sup> See the previous note.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 126 *παρ' ἐκότερα δὲ τῶν*

*δύο θυρῶν τῶν περὶ τὴν μέσσην ἄλλαι  
δύο εἶεν αὖν, μία ἐκατέρωθεν, πρὸς ἅς αἱ*

the stage has been much discussed in recent years<sup>1</sup>. Many scholars have endeavoured to prove that they were a late invention, confined to the Hellenistic theatre, and that they never existed in the fifth century. They suppose that in the old Athenian theatre the only side-entrances were those in the orchestra, and that the actors who entered or departed otherwise than through the back-scene always used the orchestra for this purpose. Now it is no doubt true, as we have already shown, that they used it sometimes. There are about twenty cases in which actors and chorus leave together in a sort of procession, chiefly at the end of a play<sup>2</sup>; and there are two cases in which they enter together<sup>3</sup>. There are also those scenes—about five in number—when the actors enter in chariots<sup>4</sup>. On all these occasions it can hardly be doubted that the actors entered and departed through the orchestra. But there are no other instances which can be regarded as at all certain. The other examples which have been brought forward are entirely conjectural. It is said that, when the actors and the chorus were supposed to come from the same place, they must always have used the same entrance. In the *Philoctetes*, for example, *Odysseus*, *Neoptolemus*, and the chorus all come from the ship. If, therefore, the sailors entered by the orchestra, the two heroes must have done the same. But there is no necessity for such an assumption. It would be absurd to demand this minute accuracy in the representation of a play. Then there are cases where an actor on the stage

πέριακτοι συμπεπήγασι. Vitruv. v. 6 'secundum ea loca versurae sunt procurrentes, quae efficiunt una a foro, altera a peregre, aditus in scaenam.' Phot. v. παρασκήνια· αἱ εἰσοδοὶ αἱ εἰς τὴν σκηνήν. Schol. Aristoph. *Lysist.* 321 νῦν ἐστὶν ἡμυχόριον τὸ λέγον ἐκ γυναικῶν εἰσερχομένων ἀνωθεν . . . τὸ δὲ ἄλλο ἡμυχόριον ἐξ ἀνδρῶν κάτωθεν ἐπερχομένων.

<sup>1</sup> See Harzmann, *Quaestiones Scenicae*, p. 43 foll.; Bodensteiner, *Scenische Fragen*, p. 703 foll.; Capps, *The Stage in the Greek Theatre*, p. 12 foll.;

Weissmann, *Scenische Aufführung*, pp. 25 foll., 76.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Aesch. *Suppl.* 1018; *Pers.* 1076. *Eur. Suppl.* 1231; *Alc.* 741. *Aristoph.* *Acharn.* 1231; *Vesp.* 1535; *Pax* 1357; *Ran.* 1524. For other instances see Bodensteiner, p. 690. Only one of these cases—the funeral procession in the *Alcestis*—occurs in the middle of a play.

<sup>3</sup> *Alcestis* 861; *Plutus* 253. Capps (p. 20 foll.) gives some additional instances; but for these there is no clear evidence.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 228.

sees another from a distance; but about ten lines intervene before the second actor comes near enough to enter into conversation with the first<sup>1</sup>. It is argued that he must have had a long way to go, and must therefore have come round by the parodos. But in all these places there is nothing to show that the person approaching was seen by the audience as soon as he was descried from the stage. He may have received his 'cue' some time after his advent was announced. It is common enough on the modern stage, when the scene is in the open air, for an actor's approach to be announced some time before he actually appears. Also, there are several cases in the ancient dramas when an actor begins to converse with the people on the stage only two or three lines after he is first seen<sup>2</sup>. These passages might be cited to prove that he had only a short way to go, and must therefore have come in by the stage. But in reality all inferences of this kind are far too subtle to be of any value. We can hardly imagine the ancient dramatists counting the number of yards to be walked before they settled the number of verses to be spoken. Another set of instances are those in which a character, after coming into sight, takes a long time to reach the point he is aiming at. Euelpides and Peisthetaerus stumble about during the delivery of fifty-three lines before they reach the hoopoe's dwelling-place. Dionysus and Xanthias converse for thirty-five lines before coming to the house of Hercules<sup>3</sup>. They too, it is said, must have entered by the orchestra, otherwise they would have reached their destination much sooner. But there is no need to suppose, in these and similar cases, that the characters were moving straight forward all the time. Any actors of ordinary experience would know how to arrange their progress in such a way as to come to the right place at the right moment. Lastly, there are scenes in which an actor, on making his entrance, fails to perceive at once another actor on the stage; or addresses the chorus before the actor;

<sup>1</sup> E. g. Oed. Tyr. 1110-1121; Agam. 489-503; Ion 392-401; Oed. Col. 310-324. See Harzmann p. 43 foll.

<sup>2</sup> E. g. Trach. 178-180, 731-734; Phil. 539-542.

<sup>3</sup> Av. 1-53, Ran. 1-35.

or is seen by the chorus before he is seen by the actor<sup>1</sup>. All this is said to prove that he must have come in by the *parodos*, and that the other actor was at first concealed from view by the intervening side-wings. But in the first place the ancient stage was so low and narrow that, as soon as an actor had fairly entered the orchestra, he could not fail to see the persons on the stage just as well as those in the orchestra. In the second place these arguments all depend on the same fallacy. They assume that in a dramatic performance, when an actor comes in, the question as to whom he shall see first, and which person he shall address first, is decided, not by the convenience of the poet, but by the science of optics. The experience of the modern stage is sufficient to prove that this is not the case.

It would be unsafe then to lay any stress on the instances just cited. The cases in which there are adequate grounds for supposing that the actors entered or departed by the orchestra amount to no more than about thirty. The question is whether these cases are sufficient to justify a wider inference. Are we to assume that, because the actors sometimes used the *parodoi*, they did so always? On the one hand it may be said that in the early theatre, with its low stage and easy communication between stage and orchestra, there was nothing to stand in the way of such a practice. On the other hand there is the fact that in the Hellenistic theatre the actors, when coming from a distance, usually entered by the side-wings. Of course in this later theatre, with its twelve-foot stage, there were obvious reasons for doing so. Still, the existence of the practice in late times is a presumption in favour of its existence previously. Moreover, when side-wings had once been introduced, nothing could be more natural than to use them as entrances. The convenience to the actors would be very great. It is difficult to see why they should have been compelled to go all round by the *parodoi*, when there was an easier mode of entrance close at hand. On the whole therefore it seems most probable that

<sup>1</sup> E.g. *Bacch.* 1216 foll.; *Hec.* 484 instances, Harzmann p. 45 foll.; *Bodensteiner* p. 716 foll. *Aj.* 1040 foll. See, for other



the side-entrances were generally used by the actors even as early as the fifth century, and that the orchestra was only employed in special cases, such as processions with the chorus.

As regards the use of these side-entrances the Athenians had a special regulation which was due entirely to local causes. The theatre at Athens was situated in such a position that the western side looked towards the city and the harbour, the eastern side towards the open country. In consequence of this fact the side-entrances upon the Athenian stage came to acquire a peculiar significance. If a man entered by the western side, it was understood that he was coming from the city where the scene of the action was laid, or from the immediate neighbourhood; or else that he had arrived from distant parts by sea, and was coming from the harbour. The eastern entrance was reserved for people who had journeyed from a distance by land. The same regulation was applied to the entrances to the orchestra. If a chorus came from the city, or the harbour, or the suburbs, it used the western *parodos*; if it came by land from a distance, it used the eastern<sup>1</sup>. It is obvious that at Athens, where play-bills were unknown, a conventional arrangement of this kind would be of great assistance to the audience, and would enable them to follow the action of the piece with greater ease and intelligence than they could otherwise have done.

<sup>1</sup> Vitruv. v. 6 'secundum ea loca versurae sunt procurentes, quae efficiunt una a foro, altera a peregre, aditus in scaenam.' Vit. Aristoph. (Dindf. Prolegom. de Comoed. p. 36) ὁ κομικός χορὸς συνέστηκεν ἐξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ εἰ μὲν ὡς ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως ἤρχετο ἐπὶ τὸ θέατρον, διὰ τῆς ἀριστερᾶς ἀψίδος εἰσῆει, εἰ δὲ ὡς ἀπὸ ἀγροῦ, διὰ τῆς δεξιᾶς. Poll. iv. 126 τῶν μέντοι παρόδων ἡ μὲν δεξιὰ ἀγρόθεν ἢ ἐκ λιμένος ἢ ἐκ πόλεως ἀγει οἱ δὲ ἀλλαχόθεν περὶ ἀφικνούμενοι κατὰ τὴν ἑτέραν εἰσίσαι. In the *Life* the words ἀπὸ ἀγροῦ denote 'from a distance.' In Pollux ἀγρόθεν apparently means 'from the country in the suburbs'; but the word is obscure and possibly corrupt. As applied to the *stage* the

words 'right' and 'left' were always used from the point of view of the actors: cp. the account of the *periaktoi* in Poll. iv. 126. But as applied to the orchestra they were sometimes used from the point of view of the actors, sometimes from that of the audience. Hence the eastern *parados* might be called the right or the left *parados*, according to the point of view from which it was regarded. This is the reason of the apparent discrepancy between the statements in the *Life* and in Pollux. The author of the *Life* is looking at the orchestra from the point of view of the actors, Pollux from the point of view of the audience.

The custom originated in the topographical situation of the Athenian theatre, but was afterwards adopted in all other Greek theatres, and became a conventional rule of the Greek stage. The entrances to the right of the audience were used by persons from the neighbourhood; the entrances to the left by persons from a distance.

#### § 4. *Changes of Scene.*

A change of scene during the actual progress of a play was a practice almost unknown upon the Greek stage during the classical period. In the extant tragedies only two instances are to be found, one in the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus, the other in the *Ajax* of Sophocles. It does not appear that in either case very much alteration in the scenery was required. In the *Eumenides* the earlier part of the action takes place in front of the temple of Apollo at Delphi, the latter part before the temple of Athene at Athens<sup>1</sup>. All that was here necessary was to change the statue in front of the temple. The background doubtless remained the same during both portions of the play. There is no reason to suppose that any attempt was made to depict the actual scenery of Delphi or of Athens. Such a supposition would be inconsistent with the rude and undeveloped state of scenic decoration during the Aeschylean period, and moreover minute accuracy of that kind was foreign to the Athenian taste. The other example of a change of scene is in the *Ajax* of Sophocles. The play begins in front of the tent of Ajax, but ends in a solitary region by the sea-shore. Here again a very slight alteration in the scenery would have been sufficient. Probably in the opening scene the tent of Ajax was represented in the centre, and there may have been some slight suggestion of a coast view on either side. During the latter part of the play the tent would be made to disappear,

<sup>1</sup> At line 566 the scene of action is transferred in reality to the Areopagus (cf. 685 πάγον δ' Ἀρείοντόνδε). But this change must have been imagined, and not represented. After Orestes

and the Furies arrive in front of the temple of Athene, they remain continuously on the stage till the end of the trial.

leaving only the coast view behind. A change of this kind might have been easily carried out, without much mechanical elaboration. It is to be noticed that in each of the above cases, while the scenery was being changed, both orchestra and stage were deserted by the performers. In the *Eumenides* it was not until Apollo had retired into the temple, and the Furies had set out in pursuit of Orestes, that the change from Delphi to Athens took place. Similarly in the *Ajax* both Tecmessa and the chorus had disappeared in search of Ajax before the scene was transferred to the sea-shore.

It appears then that as far as tragedy is concerned changes of scene were very rarely resorted to during the fifth century, and even then were of the slightest possible description. In comedy they were equally unusual. The Old Comedy was a creation of the wildest fancy, utterly unfettered by any limitations of fact or probability. In the plays of the Old Comedy the scene of the action shifts about from one place to another in the most irregular fashion. All considerations of time and space are disregarded. But it may be taken for certain that on the actual stage no attempt was made to represent these changes of scene in a realistic manner. The scenery was no doubt of the simplest and most unpretending character, corresponding to the economical manner in which comedies were put upon the stage. In all the extant plays of Aristophanes a single background would have been sufficient. For instance in the *Frogs* the action takes place partly before the house of Hercules, partly in Hades before the house of Pluto. The background probably represented the houses standing side by side, or a single house may have done duty for that of Hercules and that of Pluto in turn. The opening scene of the *Acharnians* takes place in the *Pnyx*; the rest of the play is carried on before the houses of *Dicaeopolis*, *Euripides*, and *Lamachus*. Most likely the three houses stood in a row, the *Pnyx* being sufficiently represented by a few benches upon the stage. The fact that the house of *Dicaeopolis* was supposed to be sometimes in the town, and sometimes in the country, would be of very little moment in a performance like the Old Comedy, where

the realities of existence were totally disregarded. In the *Lysistrata* the action is rapidly transferred from the front of a house to the front of the Acropolis. In the *Thesmophoriazusae* it takes place partly before a house, partly before the temple of Demeter. It is not necessary, in either of these plays, to suppose any change in the scenery. The house and the Acropolis in the one case, and the house and temple in the other, would be depicted as standing side by side. In the *Knights* the background throughout the play consisted of the house of Demos; and the *Pnyx*, as in the *Acharnians*, was represented by a few benches. As far then as the Old Comedy is concerned it is probable that changes of scenery in the course of a play were seldom or never resorted to. In the New Comedy, to judge from the adaptations of Plautus and Terence, they appear to have been equally infrequent.

The only appliances for changing scenery that are mentioned by the ancient Greek writers are the 'periaktoi'. These were huge triangular prisms, revolving on a socket at the base. Each of the three sides of the prism consisted of a large flat surface, shaped like an upright parallelogram. One of these prisms was placed at each end of the stage, in such a manner as to fit in exactly with the scene at the back, and continue it

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 126 παρ' ἐκάτερα δὲ τῶν δύο θυρῶν τῶν περὶ τὴν μέσην ἄλλαι δύο εἶεν αἱ, μία ἐκατέρωθεν, πρὸς αἷς αἱ περιaktoi συμπεπῆγασιν, ἡ μὲν δεξιὰ τὰ ἐξω πόλεως δηλοῦσα, ἡ δ' ἑτέρα τὰ ἐκ πόλεως, μάλιστα τὰ ἐκ λιμένος· καὶ θεοὺς τε θαλαττίους ἐπάγει, καὶ πάνθ' ὅσα ἐπαχθέστερα ὄντα ἡ μηχανὴ φέρειν ἄδυναται. εἰ δ' ἐπιστραφεῖν αἱ περιaktoi, ἡ δεξιὰ μὲν ἀμείβει τύπον (a. l. τὸ πᾶν) ἀμφότεραι δὲ χώραν ὑπαλλάττουσιν. Vitruv. v. 6 'secundum autem spatia ad ornatus comparata, quae loca Graeci περιakτους dicunt, ab eo quod machinae sunt in his locis versatiles trigonoe habentes singulae tres species ornatationis, quae, cum aut fabularum mutationes sunt futurae, seu deorum adventus cum tonitribus repentinis, versentur mutentque speciem ornatationis in fronte,' &c. Serv. on

Verg. Georg. iii. 24 'scaena quae fiebat aut versilis erat aut ductilis erat. Versilis tum erat cum subito tota machinis quibusdam convertebatur, et aliam picturae faciem ostendebat.' A change of τόπος means a change from one part of the same district to another; a change of χώρα means an entire change of district. Niejahr (Comment. Scaen p. 1 foll., and Oehmichen (Bühnenwesen p. 241) think the passage ἡ μὲν δεξιὰ . . . ἀδυνατεῖ refers, not to the periaktoi, but to the side-doors. But (1) the run of the passage is against this view, (2) δηλοῦσα could hardly be used of a door, (3) Vitruvius says the periaktoi were used for introducing gods, and thus proves that θεοὺς ἐπάγει in Pollux also refers to the periaktoi.

in the direction of the side-wings. Each of the three sides was painted to represent a different view, but care was taken that in every case the painting coincided exactly with the painting in the back-scene. As the *periaktos* or prism was turned round, it presented a different surface to the spectators. Accordingly it was possible, by revolving both the *periaktoi*, to make a change in the character of the scenery at each end of the stage, while the scene in the background remained the same as before. The *periaktos* to the right of the audience depicted views in the immediate neighbourhood of the city where the action was taking place. The *periaktos* to the left represented a more remote country. This fact corresponds exactly with the regulation already referred to, that the entrances to the right of the audience were reserved for people from the immediate neighbourhood, while people from a distance came in by the left.

The principal use of the *periaktoi* must have been to produce a change of scene in cases where the prominent feature of the background remained the same. For instance, if the action had been taking place in front of a temple or palace, and was to be transferred to a temple or palace in a different country, the requisite alteration might easily be carried out by means of the *periaktoi*. The building in the background would remain the same, but the scenery on each side would be altered. Occasions for using the *periaktoi* might sometimes occur during the course of a single play. But such cases, as we have seen, were extremely rare. It must have been chiefly in the intervals between successive plays that the *periaktoi* were employed. Most Greek tragedies and comedies took place before a temple, a palace, or a private house. If therefore a series of plays was being exhibited, it might be convenient to retain the same scene in the background, and produce the necessary distinction between the different plays by altering the scenery at each side. The usage of the *periaktoi* was regulated by a curious conventional custom. If only one *periaktos* was turned round, the alteration in the scenery was, of course, confined to one end of the stage. This was done when the change of scene was supposed to be a slight one, and was merely from one part of the same district to another. But when the action

was transferred to an entirely new district, then both the periaktoi were turned round, and the scenery was changed at each end. Besides their use in effecting a change of scene, the periaktoi were also employed to introduce sea-gods, and other objects too heavy for the mechane. It is not said how this was managed. But it is possible that, of the two sides of the periaktos which were out of sight of the audience, one contained a small ledge or balcony, on which the sea-god took his stand. As the machine rolled round, he would come suddenly into view<sup>1</sup>.

It is difficult to say when the periaktoi were first introduced, and whether they were used at all during the classical period of the Greek drama. They are mentioned by one grammarian among a list of stage appliances which might be ascribed to Aeschylus<sup>2</sup>. But it is unlikely that contrivances of such complexity existed at that early period. It is true that they might have been used in producing the change of scene in the Eumenides from the temple at Delphi to the temple at Athens. But they could have been easily dispensed with. In fact, as far as the extant Greek dramas are concerned, there are no occasions on which it is necessary to suppose that they were used, and there are no passages in which they are referred to. It may be doubted, therefore, whether they existed at all during the great period of the Attic drama, and whether their invention should not rather be ascribed to a later period.

The periaktoi, as stated above, are the only appliances for changing scenery that are mentioned in Greek writings. Servius describes another kind of contrivance, by means of which the scene was parted asunder in the middle, and then drawn aside in both directions, so as to disclose a new scene behind<sup>3</sup>. But it is probable that this invention dated from comparatively late times. There is nothing in the existing Greek dramas to suggest that such a contrivance was in use during the classical period.

<sup>1</sup> The suggestion is due to Navarre, *Dionysos*, p. 137. Possibly Plutarch may be referring to this contrivance when he says (*de Esu Carn.* 996 B) *μηχανὴν αἰρεῖ ποιητικὸς ἀνὴρ σκηνῆς περιφερομένης*.

<sup>2</sup> Cramer, *Anecd. Par.* i. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Serv. on Verg. *Georg.* iii. 24 'scena quae fiebat aut versilis erat aut ductilis erat . . . ductilis tum cum tractis tabulatis huc atque illuc species picturae nudabatur interior.'

§ 5. *Stage Properties, &c.*

In addition to the scenery in the background, the stage was of course decorated with such objects and properties as were required by the particular play. Aeschylus is said to have been the first to adorn the stage in this manner<sup>1</sup>. If the scene was a palace or temple, statues of the gods were generally placed in front of it, and are frequently referred to in the course of the drama. For instance, there was the statue of Athene in front of her temple in the *Eumenides*, and the statues of the tutelary deities before the palace of the *Atreidae* in the *Electra* of Sophocles. In the *Hippolytus* there were two statues in front of the palace of Theseus, one of Artemis the huntress, and the other of Cypris, the goddess of love. When Hippolytus returns from the hunt, he offers a garland of flowers to the statue of Artemis, but refuses to pay any homage to the statue of Cypris, in spite of the remonstrances of his attendant. Again, in the country region depicted in the *Oedipus Coloneus* the statue of the hero Colonus stood in a conspicuous position<sup>2</sup>. Other examples of the practice of decorating the stage with statues are often to be met with both in tragedy and in comedy. Altars, again, were very common objects upon the Greek stage. In the *Suppliants* of Aeschylus the fugitive maidens take refuge round an altar. The *Oedipus Tyrannus* opens with the spectacle of a group of Thebans kneeling in supplication before the altar of Apollo<sup>3</sup>. Another constant feature in the stage-decoration was the stone obelisk in honour of Apollo of the Highways. It was an ordinary practice among the Greeks to place such obelisks in front of their houses. Their presence upon the stage is often referred to by the dramatic poets<sup>4</sup>. Various other objects were occasionally required by particular plays. There was the

<sup>1</sup> Vit. Aesch. p. 6 Dindf. καὶ τὴν ὕψιν τῶν θεωμένων κατέπληξε τῇ λαμπρότητι, γραφαῖς καὶ μηχαναῖς, βαιμοῖς τε καὶ ταφοῖς, σάλπιγγιν, εἰδώλοις, Ἐρινύσι κ.τ.λ.

<sup>2</sup> Aesch. *Eum.* 242; Soph. *Electr.* 1373, *Oed. Col.* 59; Eur. *Hipp.* 70-106.

<sup>3</sup> Aesch. *Suppl.* 188-200; Soph. *Oed. Tyr.* 1-3, 142.

<sup>4</sup> Poll. iv. 123; Aesch. *Agam.* 1080 foll.; Schol. Eur. *Phoen.* 631; Arist. *Vesp.* 875.

tomb of Darius in the Persae, and the tomb of Agamemnon in the Choephori. In the Oedipus Coloneus a rocky ledge was needed for Oedipus to rest himself upon. In the Acharnians and the Knights a few benches must have been erected upon the stage to serve as a rude imitation of the Pnyx. Walls, watch-towers, and beacon-towers are mentioned by Pollux; and the presence of other similar decorations and erections can be inferred from the extant tragedies and comedies<sup>1</sup>.

There was one piece of realism which the Greeks were not averse to, and that was the presence of horses and chariots in the theatre. We have already referred to the instances in tragedy where persons from a distance arrive in chariots drawn by horses or mules. The vast size of the Greek theatre made it peculiarly suitable for displays of this character. In the Agamemnon of Aeschylus, Agamemnon and Cassandra approach the palace in a chariot; Agamemnon remains seated there for a considerable time, while he converses with Clytaemnestra; he then dismounts and enters the palace, leaving Cassandra still in the chariot. In the Electra of Euripides, when Clytaemnestra comes to visit her daughter at the country cottage, she arrives in a chariot, accompanied by Trojan maidens, who assist her to dismount<sup>2</sup>. Animals for riding were also occasionally introduced. In the Prometheus there is the winged steed upon which Prometheus makes his entrance; and in the Frogs of Aristophanes Xanthias rides in upon a donkey<sup>3</sup>.

### § 6. *The Ekkyklema.*

Several mechanical contrivances are mentioned in connexion with the Greek stage. The most peculiar of these, and the one most alien to all our modern notions of stage illusion, is the

<sup>1</sup> Aesch. Pers. 684, Choeph. 4; Soph. Oed. Col. 19; Poll. iv. 127.

<sup>2</sup> Aesch. Agam. 782 ff. Eur. El. 988 foll. Other instances occur in Pers. 159 (cp. 607), Troad. 569, Iph. Aul. 600. But there is no reason to infer from Aesch. Suppl. 181 and Pers. 1000 that chariots were actually introduced in

these two places.

<sup>3</sup> Prom. 286, 395; Ran. 27. As for the horse on which Ismene is riding (Oed. Col. 312), or the captured horses of Rhesus (Rhes. 671), or the flocks of Polyphemus (Cycl. 82), it is most improbable that these were brought into the theatre.



ekkyklema<sup>1</sup>. We have seen that in a Greek theatre the action always took place in the open air, before some temple or dwelling-place. It was impossible to transfer the scene to the inside of the building because of the continual presence of the chorus in the orchestra. Still, it might sometimes happen that a powerful dramatic effect could be produced, if a deed accomplished indoors was exposed to view. The most natural way of doing this would have been to draw aside the back-scene, and reveal a portion of the interior. But in the Greek theatre, owing to the narrowness of the stage-buildings, such a device was hardly practicable. Even if the stage-buildings had been made deeper, there were obvious objections in the way. The relative position of the auditorium and the stage was such that, if a room had been opened out behind the back-scene, a large part of the audience would not have been able to see into it. In any case, the back part of the room would have been almost in the dark. Further than this, the whole arrangement was far too elaborate for the simple notions of the ancient stage-managers. For these reasons a more primitive device was adopted. Scenes inside the house or palace

<sup>1</sup> The ekkyklema is described in the following passages:—Poll. iv. 128 καὶ τὸ μὲν ἐκκυκλήμα ἐπὶ ξύλων ὑψηλὸν βάθρον, ᾧ ἐπικείται θρόνος· δείκνυσιν δὲ τὰ ὑπὸ σκηνῇ ἐν ταῖς οἰκίαις ἀπόρρητα πράχθοντα, καὶ τὸ βῆμα τοῦ ἔργου καλεῖται ἐκκυκλεῖν. ἐφ' οὗ δὲ εἰσάγεται τὸ ἐκκυκλήμα, εἰσκυκλήμα ὀνομάζεται, καὶ χρὴ τοῦτο νοεῖσθαι καθ' ἐκάστην θύραν, οἷον ἐκ καθ' ἐκάστην οἰκίαν. (The θρόνος mentioned by Pollux must be derived from some particular instance of the use of the ekkyklema. The epithet ὑψηλόν may be corrupt: it is certainly not correct.) Eustath. II. 976. 15 τὸ ἐγκυκλήμα, ὃ καὶ ἐγκυκλήθρον λέγεται, μηχανήμα ἦν ὑπὸ τροχόν, ὑφ' οὗ ἐδείκνυτο τὰ ἐν τῇ σκευῇ ἢ σκηνῇ. Schol. Aesch. Choeph. 973 ἀνοίγεται ἡ σκηνὴ καὶ ἐπὶ ἐκκυκλήματος ὁρᾶται τὰ σώματα. Schol. Arist. Thesm. 96 ἐπὶ ἐκκυκλήματος γὰρ φαίνεται. Schol. Arist. Acharn. 408 ἐκκυκλήμα δὲ λέγεται μηχανήμα ξύλινον τροχοῦς ἔχον, ὅπερ περιστρεφόμενον τὰ

δοκοῦντα ἐνδον ὡς ἐν οἰκίᾳ πράττεσθαι καὶ τοῖς ἔξω ἐδείκνυε, λέγω δὴ τοῖς θεαταῖς. Schol. Aesch. Eum. 64 καὶ δευτέρα δὲ γίγνεται φαντασία· στραφέντα γὰρ μηχανήματα ἐνδὸν ποιεῖ τὰ κατὰ τὸ μαντεῖον ὡς ἔχει. Schol. Arist. Nub. 184 ὁρᾷ δὲ ὡς φιλοσόφους κομώντας, στραφέντος τοῦ ἐγκυκλήματος. Schol. Clem. Alex. iv. 97 σκεῦός τι ὑπὸ τροχόν ἐκτὸς τῆς σκηνῆς, οὗ στρεφόμενον ἐδῶκε τὰ ἔσω τοῖς ἔξω φανερά γίνεσθαι. Reich (Griech. Theater, p. 236) thinks the last four passages, in which the word στρέφειν is used, refer to a different kind of machine, by which the back-scene was rolled apart, and disclosed the interior. But this is to lay too much stress on the exact words of the grammarians. They are all obviously referring to the same device. Some sort of windlass arrangement must have been required to roll out the ekkyklema, and the word στρέφειν may refer to this.

were revealed by means of the *ekkyklema*. This was a small wooden platform, rolling upon wheels, which was kept inside the stage-buildings. When it was required to be used, one of the doors in the background was thrown open, and it was pushed forward on to the stage. Upon it was arranged a group of figures, representing in a sort of tableau the deed or occurrence which had just taken place inside the building. It was mostly used in cases where a murder had been committed. The *ekkyklema* was rolled out upon the stage, and on it were seen the corpses of the murdered persons, the murderers standing beside them with the bloody weapons in their hands. It might be rolled through any of the three doors at the back of the stage. The contrivance was of course a purely conventional one, due to the necessities of the Greek theatre. All pretence of realism and illusion was abandoned. But this was a point on which the Greeks did not lay very much stress. In such matters custom is everything. To a modern spectator, used to elaborate stage effects, the device would appear intolerable. But the Greeks, living at a time when stage decoration was in its infancy, were less exacting in their demands. And when they had once accepted the *ekkyklema* as a conventional contrivance for exhibiting interiors their plastic genius would enable them to use it to the best advantage. The sudden spectacle of the murderer standing beside his victim's body, with the instrument of death in his hands, might easily be formed into a most impressive tableau.

The *ekkyklema* was probably invented towards the middle of the fifth century, about the time when the actor's booth was first converted into a regular back-scene. It is used twice in the *Oresteia*. In the *Agamemnon*, after the murder has been committed, the platform rolls out, and reveals the person of *Clytaemnestra*, standing over the dead bodies of *Agamemnon* and *Cassandra*. In the *Choephoroi* there is a parallel scene. *Orestes* is brought into view standing beside the bodies of *Aegisthus* and *Clytaemnestra*, and pointing to the net with which his father had been slaughtered many years ago. After a time he is seized with frenzy, descends from the *ekkyklema*, and hastens

away to the temple of Apollo at Delphi. The platform is then withdrawn into the palace<sup>1</sup>. During the rest of the century there are many instances of the use of the ekkyklema in tragedy. In the *Ajax* the interior of the tent is exposed to view by this contrivance; and at the end of the *Antigone* the body of Eurydice is exhibited, lying beside the altar at which she has stabbed herself. In the *Hippolytus*, after the suicide of Phaedra, her dead body is displayed upon the ekkyklema, and Theseus takes from it the letter in which she makes her charge against Hippolytus. In the *Electra* of Sophocles the door is thrown open at the command of Aegisthus, and the platform rolls out and exhibits Orestes and Pylades standing beside the corpse of Clytaemnestra, which is covered with a cloth. Aegisthus himself removes the cloth, and then Orestes and Pylades descend to the stage, and the platform is drawn back again. In the *Hecuba* the sons of Polymestor, who have been slaughtered inside the tent, are made visible to the spectators by means of the ekkyklema. In the *Hercules Furens* Hercules is exhibited lying prostrate between the bodies of his wife and children, with his face covered up, and his limbs chained to the broken column which he had thrown down in his frenzy. Amphitryon then comes out of the palace, and loosens his chains. Later on Theseus arrives, and uncovers his face and helps him to rise. He then descends to the stage, and the ekkyklema is rolled back into the palace. Lastly, in the *Electra* of Euripides, the bodies of Aegisthus and Clytaemnestra are shown to the audience by means of this device<sup>2</sup>.

The ekkyklema is also occasionally used in Comedy. Aristophanes, on two occasions, employs it in a burlesque sort of way when he is introducing tragic poets on the stage. In the *Thesmophoriazusae*, Euripides and Mnesilochus call at the house of Agathon to borrow some female clothing. Agathon is rolled out on the ekkyklema, lends them some articles which are brought to him from inside the house, and then, when he is

<sup>1</sup> *Agam.* 1379, 1404, 1440. *Choeph.* Hipp. 808, 857; *Soph. El.* 1458-1475; 973, 981. *Hec.* 1051, 1118; *Herc. Fur.* 1029-

<sup>2</sup> *Ajax* 346; *Antig.* 1293, 1301; 1402; *Eur. El.* 1177, 1243, 1276.

tired of their importunity, orders himself to be 'rolled in again as fast as possible.' In the *Acharnians* Dicaeopolis goes to the house of Euripides to borrow a tragic dress. Euripides is upstairs in his study writing tragedies, and cannot come down, but allows himself to be rolled out, and supplies the necessary dresses<sup>1</sup>. These two passages in Aristophanes, where the mechanism of the apparatus is carefully emphasized in order to add to the ridicule, are very valuable as evidence concerning the structure of the *ekkyklema*. The device is also used in the *Clouds* to show the inside of the *phrontisterion*. The disciples of Socrates are seen hard at work on their studies, with globes, diagrams, black-boards, and other scholastic materials round about them. In the *Knights*, when the *Propylaea* is thrown open, and reveals a vision of ancient Athens, with Demos dressed up in the antique style, the spectacle may possibly have been produced by means of the *ekkyklema*<sup>2</sup>.

From the examples of the use of the *ekkyklema* which have just been cited we may gather some further particulars as to its character and construction. It appears that persons upon the *ekkyklema* could easily descend to the stage, and that persons on the stage could easily touch those on the *ekkyklema*. It follows that it must have been a low platform, not much above the level of the stage. As regards its length and breadth, it was evidently large enough to support several persons. At the same time it cannot have been of any very great size. Its width must have been less than the width of the doors in the background, to permit of its being rolled through them. Its depth cannot have been very great, because of the narrowness of the Greek stage. In the *Acharnians*, when Euripides is rolled out, he is represented as still sitting in his room upstairs. But it is unlikely, as some suppose, that

<sup>1</sup> Thesm. 95, 96 ΕΥ. οίγα. ΜΝ. τί δ' ἔστιν; ΕΥ. ἀγάθων ἐξέρχεται. | ΜΝ. καὶ ποῖός ἐστιν; ΕΥ. οὗτος οὐκ ἐκκυκλούμενος, 238 ἐνεγκάτω τις ἔνδοθεν δῶδ' ἢ λύχνον, 265 εἴσω τις ὡς τάχιστα μ' εἰσενελησάτω. Id. *Acharn.* 399 αὐτὸς δ' ἔνδον ἀναβάδην ποιεῖ, 408, 409 ΔΙ. ἀλλ' ἐκκυκλήθητ'. ΕΥ. ἀλλ' ἀδύνατον. ΔΙ. ἀλλ' ὅμως. |

ΕΥ. ἀλλ' ἐκκυκλήσομαι καταβαίνειν δ' οὐ σχολή. The word ἀναβάδην usually means 'with one's feet up,' and is so taken by many scholars in the present passage. But καταβαίνειν in l. 409 seems to prove that here at least it must mean 'upstairs.'

<sup>2</sup> Nub. 181 foll., Equit. 1327.

in this case the platform was made taller than usual, to produce the effect of an upper story. As Euripides has to hand various articles to Dicaeopolis, who is standing on the stage, there cannot have been much difference of level between the two.

In addition to the passages already mentioned, there are two other places in the extant dramas where the scholiasts say that the ekkyklema was employed. But they appear to have been mistaken in both cases. The first instance is in the *Thesmophoriazusae*. The action of this play begins before Agathon's house, but after about three hundred lines is transferred to the front of Demeter's temple, where the women hold their assembly. At this point there is a stage-direction to say that 'the Thesmophorion is rolled out'.<sup>1</sup> If these words mean that the scene was laid in the interior of the temple, and that the ekkyklema was rolled out in order to represent it, the suggestion is undoubtedly wrong. It would be absurd to imagine that the rest of the play was transacted on a small platform like the ekkyklema. But possibly the author of the note was referring, not to the ekkyklema, but to some mechanism by which he believed that the necessary change of scene was brought about. The second place is the well-known scene at the beginning of the *Eumenides*.<sup>2</sup> The play opens with the speech of the priestess, delivered in front of the temple. Then, when she departs, the interior of the temple is suddenly brought into view, and shows us Orestes kneeling before the altar, with the sleeping Furies round about him, and Apollo and Hermes standing close by. To suppose, as the scholiast suggests, that this effect was produced by the ekkyklema, is hardly possible. The platform would have been far too small to accommodate a whole tragic chorus, together with three actors. At the same time, though the explanation of the scholiast appears impracticable, it is difficult to suggest any other way in which the scene might have been acted.

<sup>1</sup> Schol. *Thesm.* 284. *παρεπιγραφή. ἐκκυκλείται ἐπὶ τὸ ἔξω τὸ θεσμοφύριον.* The words *ᾠθεῖται τὸ ἱερόν* are inserted in the text. These *παρεπιγραφαί* were

stage-directions appended to the text of the plays; but when and by whom they were written is unknown.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. *Eum.* 64.

We cannot assume that the back-scene was drawn apart, and disclosed the inside of the temple in a set-piece, after the modern fashion. This mode of revealing interiors was apparently never used on the Greek stage. If it had been possible, there would have been no need to invent the *ekkyklema*. It has been suggested that the spectacle was not really exhibited to the audience; that Apollo, Hermes, and Orestes appeared alone in front of the temple; that the ghost of Clytaemnestra called to the Furies through the temple door; and that it was not until then that the Furies came into sight, rushing out in obedience to her summons. But the general character of the scene, and the expressions used in the course of the dialogue, appear to be fatal to this supposition<sup>1</sup>. In fact, the difficulty is one for which no satisfactory solution has yet been found.

The *ekkyklema* seems to our notions such a rude device, that many critics have been led to deny its existence, at any rate during the classical period. They allow that it must have been used in later times, as it is described in detail by Pollux. But they refuse to believe that it could have been tolerated by the Athenians of the fifth century<sup>2</sup>. The evidence, however, in its favour is too strong to be set aside in this way. The passages in which it is parodied by Aristophanes correspond so closely with the descriptions of Pollux that they must obviously refer to the same mechanical device<sup>3</sup>. There are also the numerous other scenes in which an interior is revealed. It is difficult to see how the Greeks, with their peculiar stage

<sup>1</sup> When Apollo (l. 67) says *καὶ νῦν ἀλούσας τάσδε τὰς μάρτυρας ὄρας*, it is hardly conceivable that the Furies should not have been visible to the audience. Also l. 189 *ἔγω, κελεύω, τῶνδε δωμάτων τάχος | χαρεῖτε* implies that they were still inside the temple: but according to the theory in the text they had come out of the temple at l. 140.

<sup>2</sup> Reisch, *Griech. Theater*, p. 234 foll.; Capps, *The Stage in the Greek Theatre*, p. 237 foll. Neckel (*Das Ekkyklema*, p. 7 foll.) thinks the *ekky-*

*klema* was too rude a device for the taste of Aeschylus and Sophocles, and that it was first introduced in the time of Euripides. Bethe (*Prolegomena*, p. 104 foll.) thinks it was used by Aeschylus and Sophocles, but gradually dropped by Euripides.

<sup>3</sup> Reisch (p. 237 foll.) explains the two scenes in the *Thesmophoriazusae* and the *Acharnians* by supposing that Agathon and Euripides were rolled out on couches. But this theory destroys all the point and humour of the scenes.

arrangements, could have acted these scenes, except by some such contrivance as the ekkyklema. Those who deny its existence explain away these passages in various ways. They say that in many cases the bodies might have been carried out on to the stage, or arranged just inside the door, so as to be visible to the spectators. On other occasions they suppose that the back-scene was drawn aside, and showed the interior of the building. But there are several scenes to which none of these explanations would apply. In the *Hercules Furens* Hercules is shown chained to the broken column, and we cannot suppose that the column was carried out on to the stage. Nor can the spectacle have been exhibited inside the palace front. It must have been outside; since *Amphitryon*, as soon as Hercules begins to rouse himself, proposes to fly within the palace for refuge<sup>1</sup>. In the same way the scholars of *Socrates* cannot have been carried out, along with their globes and diagrams. Yet they too must have appeared upon the stage, and not inside the building; for it is explained to *Strepsiades* that they cannot remain long 'in the open air outside'. It is impossible, therefore, to account for these and other scenes in the way suggested<sup>2</sup>. They must have been effected by the ekkyklema. As for the objection that the ekkyklema was a device too clumsy for the refined taste of the fifth century, though admissible in later times, this is a kind of argument which is not supported by experience. The history of the drama in many countries shows that the greatest literary and dramatic excellence may coexist with the utmost simplicity and clumsiness in the stage arrangements. It was so in England and it was so in France. The drama of these two countries reached its highest point at a period when the art of stage decoration was in a most primitive

<sup>1</sup> *Herc. Fur.* 1008, 1070.

<sup>2</sup> *Nub.* 184, 198.

<sup>3</sup> Additional proofs that the bodies were not *carried* out are (1) *Agam.* 1379, where *Clytemnestra* says she is standing on 'the very spot where she struck the blow,' (2) *Antig.* 1301, where *Eurydice* is seen lying beside the altar

at which she had stabbed herself. That the ekkyklema-scenes were *outside* the building, and on the stage, is also proved by *Eur. El.* 1245, 1276, where the *Dioscuri*, though standing above the palace roof, can see the bodies of *Clytemnestra* and *Aegisthus*.

condition. On general grounds it would be more reasonable to assume that the ekkyklema was impossible to the Hellenistic Greeks, than that it was impossible to the Greeks of the time of Sophocles. If the former could tolerate it, the latter are not likely to have made any difficulty.

A contrivance called the exostra is occasionally referred to by the grammarians, and is mentioned in a Delian inscription of the third century B.C. The name implies that it was something which was 'pushed out' upon the stage. The metaphorical use of the word in Polybius and Cicero proves it to have been a platform on which objects were exhibited in a conspicuous manner. It is probable, therefore, that the statement of the ancient writers is correct, and that the exostra was merely the ekkyklema under another name<sup>1</sup>.

### § 7. *The Mechane and Theologeion.*

Another appliance of even greater importance than the ekkyklema, and one very frequently employed upon the Greek stage, was the 'mechane' or Machine<sup>2</sup>. It consisted of a sort of crane with a pulley attached, by which weights could be raised or lowered. It was placed in the left or western corner of the stage, up at the very top of the back-scene. It was

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 129 τὴν δὲ ἐξώστραν ταύτων τῷ ἐκκυκλήματι νομίζουσιν. Hesych. v. ἐξώστρα· ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς τὸ ἐκκύκλημα. Delian inscription of 274 B.C. (Bull. Corr. Hell. 1894, p. 162) τὰς ἐξώστρας . . . ἐπισκευάσαι Polyb. xi. 6. 8 τῆς τύχης ὡς περ ἐπίτηδες ἐπὶ τὴν ἐξώστραν ἀναβιβαζούσης τὴν ὑμετέραν ἀγνοίαν. Cic. de Prov. Cons. § 14 iam in exostra helluatur, antea post siparium solebat.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 128 ἡ μηχανὴ δὲ θεοὺς δείκνυσσι καὶ ἥρωας τοὺς ἐν ἀέρι, Βελλεροφόντας ἢ Περσέας, καὶ κίτται κατὰ τὴν ἀριστερὰν παράδον, ὑπὲρ τὴν σκηνὴν τὸ ὕψος. Schol. Luc. Philops. vii. p. 357 (Lehmann) ἀνῶθεν ὑπὲρ τὰς παρ' ἐκάτερα τῆς μέσης τοῦ θεάτρου θύρας . . . μηχανῶν δύο μετεωριζομένων ἢ ἐξ ἀριστερῶν θειοὺς

καὶ ἥρωας ἐνεφάνιζε παρευθὺ, ὡς περ λύσιν φέροντας τῶν ἀμηχάνων. Aristoph. Daedal. fr. 9 (Meineke) ὁ μηχανοποιός, ὁπότε βούλει τὸν τροχὸν | ἐλᾶν ἀνεκὰς, λέγε, χαίρε φέγγος ἡλίου. The μηχανή was also called ἐῶρημα, Suidas s. v. The ropes to which the actor was suspended were called αἰῶραι; Poll. iv. 131 αἰῶρας δ' ἂν εἴποις τοὺς κάλως οἱ κατήρτηνται ἐξ ὕψους ἀνέχειν τοὺς ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀέρος φέρεσθαι δοκοῦντας ἥρωας ἢ θεοὺς. The hook by which he was fastened was ἄρπαξ or ἀγκυρίς; Bekk. Anecd. i. 232 (of the Crane) ἄρπαξ . . . ἐξ οὗ δ' ἐσκευασμένος ὑποκριτῆς τραγωδῆ. Plut. Prov. 116 (of the Fig-Branch) ἀγκυρίς, ἀφ' ἧς οἱ ὑποκριταὶ . . . ἐξαρτῶνται . . . ζωστήρσι καὶ ταυνίαις κατειλημμένοι.



used in case the characters of a play had to appear or disappear in a supernatural manner. By its means a god or hero could be lowered from heaven down to earth, or raised up from earth to heaven, or exhibited motionless in mid-air. Sometimes the god was represented as sitting in a chariot, or on a winged steed; but in most cases he was simply suspended from the rope by means of a hook and bands fastened round his body. The strength of the mechane must have been considerable, since it was powerful enough to support two or three people at the same time. As to the way in which it was worked, and the manner in which the actors were made to disappear from view at the top of the stage, there is no information. Unfortunately the construction of the upper part of the stage-buildings is a subject about which we are entirely ignorant. It is useless therefore to hazard conjectures concerning the exact nature of the arrangements adopted. The grammarians also speak of two other contrivances, the Crane and the Fig-Branch, as used for moving people through the air. But whether they were really distinct from the mechane is far from certain. The Fig-Branch is said to have been designed specially for comedy. It appears, however, from the description to have been much the same as the mechane, and was probably only a comic name for it<sup>1</sup>. The Crane is described as an instrument for conveying the bodies of dead heroes up into the sky. Possibly the Crane also was merely another name for the mechane; or it may have been a separate contrivance, placed at the other end of the back-scene, and used exclusively for the removal of dead bodies. In any case it cannot have differed very much from the mechane in structure<sup>2</sup>. There are one or two passages in the ancient writers

<sup>1</sup> Plut. Prov. 116 κράδης βαγείσης νῦν οὐχ ὁ σῦκινος κλάδος, ἀλλ' ἡ ἀγκυρίς, ἀφ' ἧς οἱ ὑποκριταὶ ἐν ταῖς τραγικαῖς σκηναῖς ξαρτῶνται θεοῦ μιμούμενοι ἐπιφάνειαν. So Hesych. v. κράδῃ. Pollux (iv. 128) makes the κράδῃ the comic counterpart of the μηχανή, which is utterly improbable. Crusius (Philologus, 1889, p. 698) suggests very

plausibly that κράδης βαγείσης was the beginning of a line in some comic poet, who applied the name 'fig-branch' contemptuously to the hook of the μηχανή.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 130 ἡ δὲ γέρανός μηχανήμα ἐστὶν ἐκ μετεώρου καταφερόμενον ἐφ' ἀρπαγῇ σώματος, ᾧ κέχρηται Ἡὼς ἀρπάξουσά τ' αὐτὰ τὸ Μέμνονος. The scholiast

where the mechane is described as a 'kind of ekkyklema,' and persons are said to have been rolled out by means of it<sup>1</sup>. It is uncertain in these cases whether the grammarians are confusing the two machines; or whether they are thinking of the theologeion, which, as we shall see later on, may have been worked by mechanism similar to that of the ekkyklema.

Examples of the use of the mechane are fairly common both in the extant dramas and in the records of the grammarians. At the same time there is often a doubt, when a personage makes his appearance on high, whether he was exhibited by means of this device or in some other way. For the present, therefore, we will confine ourselves to those cases where the person is described as moving through the air, and where it seems clear that, if any machinery was employed, it must have been the mechane. The earliest instance is probably that in the Prometheus. Oceanus descends on a 'winged quadruped,' converses some time with Prometheus, and then rides away again, saying as he goes that his steed yearns to 'skim with its wings the smooth paths of air.' We are told also that in the Psychostasia, the lost play of Aeschylus, the body of Memnon was carried by Dawn into the sky<sup>2</sup>. Both these instances have been doubted, but merely on general grounds, and without adequate reason. But there are two other supposed examples in Aeschylus which are far more open to question. There is the scene in the Eumenides where Athene arrives from Troas, and where it is thought that she descends from the sky. The language, however, in which she describes her journey is ambiguous and full of difficulty. In three successive lines she appears to say that she has walked, flown, and driven in a chariot<sup>3</sup>. It would be unsafe in a case like this

on Lucian (quoted on p. 236) speaks of *two μηχαναί*, one at each end of the back-scene; and then proceeds to describe the ordinary *μηχανή*, but says nothing about the other one. Hence Oehmichen (*Bühnenwesen*, p. 247) conjectures that this other *μηχανή* was the *γέρανός*.

<sup>1</sup> Bekk. Anecd. i. 208 *μηχανή ἔστι*

*παρὰ τοῖς κομικοῖς ἐκκυκλήματός τι εἶδος . . . δειξέως χάριν θεοῦ ἢ ἄλλου τινὸς ἥρωος*. Lucian, *Philops.* 29 *θεὸν ἀπὸ μηχανῆς ἐπεισκυκληθῆναι μοι τοῦτον ᾤμην*. Philostrate, *vit. Apoll.* vi. 11 *ἐφ' ὑψηλῆς καὶ θέας μηχανῆς ἐκκυκλούσιν*.

<sup>2</sup> *Prom.* 284, 394. Pollux, iv. 130.

<sup>3</sup> *Eum.* 403-405.

to draw any inference as to the exact manner in which she made her entrance on to the stage. There is also the scene in the *Prometheus* where the Oceanides enter in a 'winged car,' halt in front of Prometheus for about a hundred and fifty lines, and then, at his bidding, dismount from their 'swift-rushing seat' and descend into the orchestra<sup>1</sup>. Here, too, the mechane has been suggested. But it is scarcely credible that a whole tragic chorus should have been suspended in front of Prometheus during the delivery of a hundred and fifty lines. Even if the machinery had been strong enough to support twelve or fifteen choristers, the spectacle would have been ludicrous<sup>2</sup>. It is much better to suppose that the car was rolled in along the stage, its previous flight being left to the imagination of the spectators. After the time of Aeschylus there are many instances of the use of the mechane. Euripides often employs it to wind up his plays. At the end of the *Andromache* Thetis comes into view 'voyaging through the bright air.' At the end of the *Electra* the Dioscuri arrive by a 'path impossible to mortals,' and depart later on 'through the regions of the sky.' Medea's appearance with her children in the aerial car may be safely regarded as a further example, though there is no mention in this case of any ascent or descent<sup>3</sup>. The device is also introduced in other parts of a play. In the *Hercules Furens* Iris and Lyssa come down from heaven in a chariot; then Iris re-ascends, while Lyssa goes on into the palace. In the *Bellerophon* the hero rode up to heaven on the winged steed Pegasus; and in the *Andromeda* Perseus flew down through the air to the foot of the cliff where the heroine was chained<sup>4</sup>. The mechane is also parodied in many places by Aristophanes. In the *Clouds*, Socrates is seen hanging in a basket in mid-air, and studying astronomy. Iris, in the *Birds*, comes floating down from the sky in such an irregular and eccentric fashion that Peisthetaerus has the

<sup>1</sup> Prom. 135, 280.

<sup>2</sup> That the capacities of the μηχανή were not unlimited is proved by Pollux, iv. 126 θεοὺς θαλαττίους ἐπάγει, καὶ πάνθ' ὅσα ἐπαχθέστερα ὄντα ἡ μηχανή

φέρειν ἄδυναται.

<sup>3</sup> Androm. 1229, Eur. El. 1235, 1349, Med. 1317, ff.

<sup>4</sup> Herc. Fur. 817, 872, 880. Eur. frags. 124, 306, 307. Poll. iv. 128.

greatest difficulty in bringing her to a standstill. In a fragment of the *Daedalus* the actor who is going to ascend entreats the man in charge of the machinery to give him warning, before he begins to haul up the rope, by exclaiming 'hail, light of the sun.' The ascent of Trygaeus upon a beetle in the *Peace* was intended as a parody upon the *Bellerophon* of Euripides. The speech of Trygaeus, in the course of his aerial journey, consists of a ludicrous mixture of phrases from the *Bellerophon*, shouts to the beetle to keep his head straight, and terrified appeals to the stage-manager to look after the security of the pulley<sup>1</sup>.

In addition to the *mechane* there was also another appliance in use upon the Greek stage for the purpose of exhibiting gods in a supernatural manner. It was called the *theologeion*, and represented the gods as stationary in heaven, and not as moving through the air. It consisted, apparently, of a narrow platform in the upper part of the back-scene<sup>2</sup>. Probably it was similar in construction to the *ekkyklema*, and was usually invisible, but was pushed forward through an opening at the back when required. It has been suggested that the *theologeion* was in reality nothing more than the palace roof. But this theory is hardly a plausible one. When the gods were to be exhibited in celestial splendour in the sky, it would have been undignified and incongruous to place them on the roof of a human habitation. Also the position of the *theologeion* is expressly described as being high up above the stage<sup>3</sup>. As regards its usage, the only recorded instance is that in the *Psychostasia* of Aeschylus. Zeus was there represented as sitting in heaven, holding scales in his hands, in which were placed the destinies of Achilles and Memnon respectively. On each side of him stood Thetis and Dawn, supplicating for the lives of their sons. The scene was in imitation of that in the *Iliad*, where Zeus weighs the fates of

<sup>1</sup> Nub. 218, Av. 1199, *Daedal.* frag. 9, Pax 154 foll.

<sup>2</sup> A supposed representation of a *theologeion* on a medallion of the Roman period, found at Orange, is given in Baumeister, fig. 1832, and Griech. Theater, p. 335. Jupiter,

Minerva, and Victoria are depicted as sitting on a tall and narrow stage, while Mars and Hercules confront one another underneath. But there is nothing to show that the scene represents a theatrical performance.

<sup>3</sup> See next note. See also p. 188.

Achilles and Hector<sup>1</sup>. It is probable that the theologeion was also used in the Peace, in the scene where Trygaeus ascends to heaven, and converses with Hermes in front of the palace of Zeus<sup>2</sup>.

The relationship between the theologeion and the mechane has been much discussed during the last few years, and various theories have been brought forward on the subject. Some of the critics think the mechane was the older and more primitive device, and that the theologeion was invented towards the end of the fifth century, to serve as a substitute, and avoid the awkwardness of the previous arrangement<sup>3</sup>. Others take exactly the opposite view, and regard the theologeion as the simple contrivance of the early drama, and the mechane as a later and more picturesque piece of machinery<sup>4</sup>. Neither of these views can be maintained except by a somewhat arbitrary treatment of the evidence. We have clear testimony as to the existence both of the mechane and of the theologeion in the time of Aeschylus; and it seems uncritical to reject this testimony in the one case, and accept it in the other. As regards the question of priority, it is impossible to come to any decision, owing to the paucity of the early dramas which have been preserved. But there is one point which deserves consideration. We have seen that there are several cases at the close of a play in which the mechane was unquestionably used to introduce the god who solved the difficulties of the plot. The god's arrival is described in language which leaves no doubt upon the subject. But there are many other cases in which he appears for a similar purpose, and in which he is simply described as standing in some elevated position, and nothing is said about any flight through the air<sup>5</sup>. There are also several plays at the end of which the god appears abruptly, without any notice as to his standing-place, or the

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 130 ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ θεολογείου ὄντος ὑπὲρ τὴν σκηνὴν ἐν ὕψει ἐπιφαίνονται θεοί, ὡς Ζεὺς καὶ οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν ἐν Ψυχόστασις. Plut. *And. Poet.* 17 A.

<sup>2</sup> Niejahr, however (*Quaest. Scaen.* p. 20 foll.), suggests that Trygaeus only rose a short distance upon the beetle, then descended to earth again, and that his own house then did duty as the house of Zeus.

<sup>3</sup> Wilamowitz, *Herakles*, i. p. 148.

<sup>4</sup> Reisch, *Griech. Theater*, p. 227 foll. Bodensteiner, *Scenische Fragen*, p. 665 foll. Bethe (*Prolegomena*, p. 133) thinks neither the mechane nor the theologeion were used before about 427, when he supposes there was a great reorganization of the scenic arrangements (see above p. 196).

<sup>5</sup> Ion 1549, Rhesus 886, *Orest.* 1631.

manner in which he arrived; but in which it is evident, from the analogy of the other dramas, that he appeared above the heads of the ordinary actors<sup>1</sup>. In both these latter classes of play there is some uncertainty as to the nature of the machinery employed. The question may be raised whether, when there is no mention of any movement through the air, the god was introduced by the mechane or by the theologeion. Was he floated down from the sky, or pushed out through the back-scene? Some scholars maintain that the theologeion was the device used in these particular cases; and the supposition is no doubt possible. But, on the other hand, the fact that there is no allusion to the mechane in the course of the dialogue proves nothing as to its presence or its absence. There are many places in which the ekkyklema was obviously employed, yet the text contains no reference to it. Also it is clear that from the beginning of the fourth century the mechane became the regular contrivance for introducing gods at the close of a drama. Plato remarks that the tragedians, when in a difficulty, 'have recourse to the mechane, and suspend their gods in mid-air.' Antiphanes, the comic poet, ridicules the practice of hanging out the mechane at the end of a tragedy. Aristotle speaks of the mechane as the invariable device on such occasions. The phrase 'deus ex machina' appears already in the fourth century as a proverbial expression for an unexpected benefactor<sup>2</sup>. It seems more probable, therefore, that the mechane was regularly used, even in the fifth century, for the same purpose. We have several cases in which it must have been so employed, and none in which it is necessary to introduce the theologeion. The only known example of the use of the theologeion is that in the Psychostasia. Any further cases in which its presence is assumed must be purely conjectural.

<sup>1</sup> Hipp. 1282, Iph. Taur. 1435, Eur. Suppl. 1183, Hel. 1642, Phil. 1409, Bacch. 1331.

<sup>2</sup> Plat. Cratyl. 425 D οἱ τραγῳδοί, ἐπειδὴν τι ἀπορώσιν, ἐπὶ τὰς μηχανὰς καταφεύγουσι θεοὺς αἰρουῦντες. Antiphanes (Meineke, iii. p. 106) ἔπειθ' ὕταν μὴδὲν

δύναντ' εἰπεῖν ἔτι | . . . αἰρουσιν ὥσπερ δάκτυλον τὴν μηχανήν, | καὶ τοῖς θεωμένοις ἀποχρῶντας ἔχει. Aristot. Poet. c. 15. Demosth. p. 1025 ὥσπερ ἀπὸ μηχανῆς. Schol. Plat. Bekk. p. 381 ἀπὸ μηχανῆς θεὸς ἐπεφάνη. Μένανδρος Θεοφορομένην.

Before leaving this subject a few remarks may be made on the general question of the appearances of the gods in tragedy. In the early drama the gods often played an important part in the action of the piece. They came down to earth and mixed with mankind after the old Homeric fashion. Their arrivals and departures might be conducted in a supernatural manner, but when they were once on the stage they moved about like ordinary human beings. Such is still the case in plays like the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus. But later on, as the tone of the drama became more entirely human, the gods began to be excluded more and more from any real share in the plot. Their occasional presence at the scene of action was managed with more dignity and splendour. It is rare to find them appearing side by side with human beings, as Athene apparently does in the *Rhesus* and in the opening scene of the *Ajax*<sup>1</sup>. The *Bacchae* is an exceptional case, since Dionysus is there disguised as a young man. But usually, in the later drama, the intervention of the gods was restricted to the beginning and the end of the play, when they came forward to speak the prologue and the epilogue. In such cases they no longer join with mortal men in the free and easy intercourse of the Homeric period. Their movements are more dignified and celestial. It is true that in the prologues, when they are alone, and no human beings have yet intruded on the stage, they make their entrance on foot, and walk the earth like ordinary men<sup>2</sup>. But at the end of the play, when the stage is occupied by mortals, they disdain to tread the same ground with them, and are exhibited in the sky by means of the mechane. Even in the prologues it appears that the same practice was introduced in the course of the fourth century, and that henceforth all apparitions of the gods, both at the beginning and the end of a play, were made equally supernatural<sup>3</sup>. This formal introduction of deities

<sup>1</sup> *Rhesus* 596 (cp. 627); *Ajax* 1-133.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Hipp. 53 *ἔξω τῶνδε βήσομαι τόπων*. Ion 76 *ἐς δαφνώδη γύαλα βήσομαι τάδε*. In the *Troades*, though Hecuba is on the stage during the speech of

Poseidon and his colloquy with Athene, she is lying prostrate on the ground, overcome with grief, and is unconscious of their presence.

<sup>3</sup> Aristot. *Poet.* c. 15 *ἀλλὰ μηχανῇ*

at the beginning and the close, which was now practically the sole survival of the old divine participation in the drama, is the subject of a well-known criticism by Aristotle. He allows that it is perfectly legitimate, when the gods are carefully excluded from the action, and are brought in merely to give information about the past, or to predict the future. But he strongly censures the later practice of employing them at the end of a tragedy to solve the difficulties of the plot. He says that in a well-constructed play the conclusion should be the natural result of the preceding incidents, and there should be no need of any supernatural agency<sup>1</sup>. Euripides has generally been regarded as the chief offender against his rule, and as the author of the custom which he condemns. But it will be found, on examining his plays, that there are very few of them in which the god is really used as a last resort. There are only two instances in which he can be said to solve the problems of the situation. In the other cases he is introduced, not so much to set matters right, as to inform the characters of the destiny which awaits them. His function is confined to announcing the future course of events<sup>2</sup>. These, therefore, are what Aristotle would call permissible uses of the 'deus ex machina.'

### § 8. *Other Mechanical Contrivances.*

Several other devices in use upon the Attic stage are briefly mentioned by Pollux, but his descriptions are so meagre and obscure that little can be inferred as to their exact character. Charon's Steps was a contrivance for bringing ghosts and spectres up from the lower world. It can hardly have been anything else than a flight of steps leading out upon the stage from underneath. The 'anapiesma' was used by river-gods,

χρηστέον ἐπὶ τὰ ἔξω τοῦ δράματος ἢ ὅσα πρὸ τοῦ γέγονεν, ἃ οὐχ οἷόν τε ἀνθρώπων εἶδέναι, ἢ ὅσα ὑστερον ἂν δείτῃ προ-αγορεύσεως καὶ ἀγγελίας. Here ὅσα πρὸ τοῦ γέγονεν apparently refers to the prologue. For the practice of later times cp. Evanthius de Comoedia, p. 6

Reif. (quoted by Bethe, Prolegom. p. 133) 'deinde θεοὺς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς, id est, deos narrandis argumentis machinatos, ceteri Latini ad instar Graecorum habent.'

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. Poet. c. 15.

<sup>2</sup> See the Tragic Drama of the Greeks, p. 245.



Furies, and other subterranean beings for the purpose of appearing above ground. The word 'anapiesma' seems to mean something which was pushed back. It is probable, therefore, that the contrivance was merely the ordinary trap-door of the modern theatre, through which the spectral being was raised on to the stage<sup>1</sup>. Whether these two devices were used as early as the fifth century is somewhat doubtful. There are few occasions in the extant plays and fragments where they would have been serviceable, and none where they are absolutely necessary. The ghost of Darius in the *Persae* arises out of his tomb, and the ghost of Achilles in the lost *Polyxena* of Sophocles apparently revealed himself in the same way<sup>2</sup>. In these two cases it is needless to suppose any special apparatus beyond the tomb itself. The ghost of Clytaemnestra in the *Eumenides*, and that of Polydorus in the *Hecuba*, may possibly have risen from underground. But there is nothing in the text of the plays to show that this was the case, and an entrance in the ordinary manner would have satisfied all requirements. Some critics suppose that in the *Prometheus* the punishment which had been threatened by Hermes was actually carried out before the eyes of the spectators, and that the tragedy ended with the disappearance of Prometheus beneath the stage. But a melodramatic conclusion of this kind seems far from probable, and out of keeping with the character of the ancient drama. It is more likely that when the play was over the actor simply walked off the stage, or was concealed from view by a curtain. Or he may have remained in position until the beginning of the next piece, the *Prometheus Unbound*, in which he was again represented as chained to a cliff. The 'bronteion' was a device for imitating the noise of thunder behind the scenes, and was of a very simple character. Pebbles were poured out of a jar into a large brazen vessel; bags were filled with stones and flung against a metal surface; or leaden balls were dropped

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 132 αἱ δὲ Χαράνιοι κλίμακες, κατὰ τὰς ἐκ τῶν ἐδωλίων καθόδους κείμεναι, τὰ εἶδωλα ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀναπέμπουσιν. τὰ δὲ ἀναπίσματα, τὸ μὲν ἔστιν ἐν τῇ σιγῇ ὡς ποταμὸν ἀνελθεῖν ἢ τοιοῦτον

τι πρόσωπον, τὸ δὲ περὶ τοὺς ἀναβαθμούς, ἀπ' ὧν ἀνέβαινον Ἑρινίης.

<sup>2</sup> Pers. 659, Nauck, Trag. Graec. Frag. p. 246 προφαίνονμένον ὑπὲρ τοῦ τάφου.

upon a sheet of leather stretched tight<sup>1</sup>. The 'keraunoskopeion' was obviously intended to imitate lightning, though the description in Pollux is unintelligible. But Heron, the mathematician, speaks of a device used in automaton theatres, by which a plank, with a flash of lightning painted on a dark background, was shot out of a box into a receptacle below. Possibly Pollux may be alluding to an arrangement of this kind<sup>2</sup>. The 'stropheion' was some sort of revolving machinery, by which heroes were exhibited in heaven, or deaths at sea or in battle were represented. The 'hemikyklion' was semicircular in shape, and gave a distant view of a city, or of a person swimming in the sea. The 'hemistrophion' is merely mentioned by name, and no description of it is appended<sup>3</sup>.

The question whether a drop-scene was used in the Athenian theatre during the great period of the drama is one which has not yet been satisfactorily settled. In Roman theatres a drop-scene was invariably used between the different plays, the mechanism being exactly the reverse of that employed in modern times. When a play was going to begin, the curtain was let down into a narrow crevice in front of the stage, and at the end of the performance was drawn up again<sup>4</sup>. There can be no doubt that similar curtains were used in Greek theatres at a later period; but the question is whether they were used at Athens during the fifth and fourth centuries. There are no references to anything of the kind in the extant Greek dramas, and there are no passages in ancient writers which can be held to prove the existence of a drop-scene in the early Athenian theatre<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Nub. 292; Poll. iv. 130; Heron (in Thevenot, *Mathematici Veteres*, p. 263). See Weismann, *Scen. Anweis.* p. 45 foll.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 130 *κεραυνοσκοπέον* . . . *περιακτος ὑψηλή*. Heron, l. c. p. 265. Weismann (l. c. p. 48), who was the first to draw attention to the passage in Heron, supposes that there was a periaktes high up in the back-scene, and that an apparatus like that of Heron's was fastened to all three sides of it, so that by revolving the periaktes three successive flashes might be exhibited.

<sup>3</sup> Poll. iv. 127, 131, 132.

<sup>4</sup> Ovid, *Met.* iii. 111; Hor. *Ep.* ii. 1. 189.

<sup>5</sup> The following passages are cited in proof of the existence of a drop-scene:—(1) Athen. 536 *A γενομένων δὲ τῶν Δημητρίων Ἀθήνησιν ἐγράφετο ἐπὶ τοῦ προσκήνιου (ὁ Δημήτριος) ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκουμένης ὀχούμενος*. Here *προσκήνιον* more probably denotes the scene at the back of the stage. (2) Suid. v. *προσκήνιον* τὸ πρὸ τῆς σκηνῆς παραπέτασμα· ἡ δὲ τύχη παρελκομένη τὴν πρόφασιν καθάπερ ἐπὶ προσκήνιον παρεγύμνωσε τὰς

The question must therefore be discussed on general grounds. To our modern notions a drop-scene appears to be almost a necessity in the case of plays which commence with the actors already in position upon the stage. In the Greek drama such plays are not infrequent. For instance, in the opening scene of the Oedipus Tyrannus the Thebans are discovered kneeling at the altar before the palace of the king. In the Troades, when Poseidon comes forward to speak the prologue, he sees Hecuba stretched upon the ground in an attitude of despair. The Orestes of Euripides opens with Orestes stretched upon a bed in front of the palace, and his sister Electra watching beside him. Many other examples might be cited of plays which begin with the actors already in a fixed position. Unless, therefore, a drop-scene was used between the plays, it would have to be supposed that the actors came on the stage in full view of the people, took up the required position, and then began the dialogue. There would be a great sacrifice of illusion in such a mode of commencement. Besides this, the drop-scene would of course be a natural and obvious mode of concealing the stage from view while the scenery was being altered between the different plays. For these reasons it has been inferred that the Athenians cannot have done without one. But, on the other hand, it has already been pointed out that it is a great mistake to apply our modern notions of propriety to an ancient dramatic performance. The Athenian drama was quite unlike any modern exhibition, and

ἀληθεὶς ἐπινοίας. Suidas has here mistaken the meaning of the passage he quotes, in which προσκῆνιον = 'the stage.' (3) Synesius (flor. about 400 A.D.) Aegypt. p. 128 C εἰ δέ τις . . . κunoφθαλμίζοιτο διὰ τοῦ προσκηνίου. Even if προσκῆνιον means the drop-scene in this passage, it would be no proof of the existence of a drop-scene in classical times. (4) Poll. iv. 122 (speaking of the theatre) ἔξεστι δὲ καὶ τὸ παραπέτασμα αὐλαίαν καλεῖν, ὑπερείδον εἰπόντος ἐν τῷ κατὰ Πατροκλέους· οἱ δὲ ἐννέα ἄρχοντες εἰσιῶντο ἐν τῇ στοᾷ, περιφραζάμενοί τι μέρος αὐτῆς αὐλαίᾳ. Suidas v. αὐλαία, and Bekk. Anecd.

p. 463 αὐλαία τὸ τῆς σκηνῆς παραπέτασμα· κέχρηται δὲ αὐτῷ Ὑπερείδης ἐν τῷ κατὰ Πατροκλέους. Hesych. v. αὐλαία . . . τὸ τῆς σκηνῆς παραπέτασμα. Et. Mag. p. 170 λέγονται δὲ αὐλαίαι καὶ τὰ παραπετάσματα τῆς σκηνῆς, ὡς παρὰ τῷ θεολόγῳ. It is obvious that the grammarians here cited were thinking of a drop-scene. But the passage they refer to in Hypereides has nothing to do with a drop-scene. It is doubtful, therefore, whether this testimony is of any value except for the practice of later times. It can hardly be considered decisive for the classical period.

one point of difference may have been the absence of the drop-scene. On the Athenian stage, where the changes of scenery required between the different plays were usually of the slightest character, it was not nearly so necessary as in modern times. Its chief advantage would have been in the case of plays which open with the actors already arranged in a sort of tableau. To judge by our modern ideas, the effect in such cases would have been greatly heightened, and the illusion much more fully carried out, by the use of a drop-scene. But the Greeks did not lay very much stress upon realism and illusion in their scenic arrangements. They were satisfied with simple and conventional methods of representing events upon the stage. Such devices as the *ekkyklema* and the *periaktoi* would never have been tolerated by them, if their aim had been to produce an illusion by the accurate imitation of real objects. Hence it is possible that in the dramas just referred to they were quite content for the actors to come forward and take up their position in full view of the audience, before the play actually commenced. That such a supposition is not inadmissible is proved by the custom of the early English drama. On the Elizabethan stage we know for a fact that there was no drop-scene, and that in many cases a tableau had to be arranged before the eyes of the spectators before the action could begin. Yet the audience of those days was not dissatisfied. The Athenians may have been equally indifferent in the matter of the drop-scene. At the same time there is no evidence to prove that such was the case. And the drop-scene is a very convenient device, and one that would naturally suggest itself. On the whole therefore it seems safest, until further evidence is forthcoming, to regard the question as an open one<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Bethe (*Prolegomena*, p. 198 foll.) thinks the drop-scene was introduced into the Greek theatre about 427 B.C., at the same time as the raised stage. His reason is that none of the plays which begin with a tableau are previous to 427 in date. But the *Agamemnon* commences with the watchman reclining

on the palace roof. The *Heracleidae* (probably anterior to 427) opens with a group of suppliants at an altar. The *Oedipus Rex*, which also begins with a tableau, is of unknown date, and there is nothing to show that it was later than 427.

## CHAPTER V

### THE ACTORS

#### § 1. *Rise of the Actor's Profession.*

BEFORE proceeding to give an account of the actors in the ancient Greek drama, there are one or two points which ought to be made clear, in order to avoid possible misconceptions. In the first place the actors and the chorus were entirely distinct from one another. The chorus was chosen and paid by the choregus, and performed in the orchestra. The actors were hired by the state, and their proper place was upon the stage. The term 'hypokrites,' or 'actor,' was never applied to the members of the chorus. It was not even applied to all the performers upon the stage, but only to such of them as took a prominent part in the dialogue. The various mute characters, such as the soldiers and attendants, and also the subordinate characters who had only a few words to say, were not dignified with the title of 'actor.' In the second place it should be remembered that the Greek actors invariably wore masks, and were consequently able to appear in several parts in the course of the same performance. When, therefore, it is said that in the early history of Greek tragedy only a single actor was employed in each play, this does not imply that the number of characters was limited to one. All it implies is that only one character could appear at a time. The number of actors in a Greek play never exceeded three, even in the latest period. But the effect of this regulation upon the capacities of the Greek drama was less cramping and restrictive than might have been supposed. There was no limitation to the number of mute and subordinate characters which might be introduced

at any time upon the stage. There was no restriction upon the number of the more prominent characters, provided they were not brought upon the stage simultaneously. The only limitation was this—that not more than three of the more prominent characters could take part in the dialogue in the course of the same scene.

The principal function of the actors was to carry on the dialogue and work out the action of the play. The principal function of the chorus was to sing the odes which filled up the pauses in the action. Of course very frequently the chorus took part in the dialogue; but, speaking in general terms, the dialogue was the business of the actors. Such was the condition of things during the best period of the Attic drama. But in former times the case had been very different. At first the whole performance was a choral one, and consisted simply of the songs and hymns chanted at the festivals of Dionysus. There were no actors and there was no dialogue. The history of the early development of the drama is in other words the history of the gradual introduction of actors and dialogue into a choral entertainment, and the gradual increase in the importance of the dialogue, until eventually it overshadowed the choral part altogether. The first step in the process by which a lyrical performance was converted into a dramatic one was as follows. The custom arose of filling up the intervals between the different portions of the choral songs with recitations by the leader of the chorus, and dialogues between him and the other members. For this purpose the leader of the chorus used to mount upon a small table. The subject of the recitations and the dialogues would be the same as the subject of the ode, and would in most cases refer to the adventures of the god Dionysus. In these interludes by the leader of the chorus lay the germ of the drama. The performance as a whole was still essentially lyrical, but the practice of inserting dialogue had been established<sup>1</sup>. In the case of tragedy the next step forward

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 123 ἐλεὺς δ' ἦν τράπεζα ἀρχαία, ἐφ' ἣν πρὸ Θέσπιδος εἰς τις ἀναβὰς τοῖς χορευταῖς ἀπεκρίνατο. Arist.

Poet. c. 4 καὶ ἡ μὲν (τραγωδία ἐγένετο) ἀπὸ τῶν ἐξαρχόντων τὸν διθύραμβον, ἡ δὲ (κωμῳδία) ἀπὸ τῶν τὰ φαλλικά.

was taken by Thespis. He introduced a single actor, who took the part which had previously been taken by the leader of the chorus, and filled up the pauses in the choral odes either with monologues or with dialogues between himself and the leader<sup>1</sup>. Not much is known about the drama of Thespis except that it was still essentially lyrical. But as he is said to have employed masks, it is clear that the single actor might appear in different characters in successive scenes, and in this way some approach might be made to a dramatic representation of a story<sup>2</sup>. The decisive innovation was due to Aeschylus. He introduced a second actor, and effected a total change in the character of the performance. Henceforward the intervals between the choral odes were filled with dialogues between the two actors upon the stage, instead of dialogues between the single actor and the leader of the chorus. At the same time Aeschylus cut down the length of the choral odes, and made the dialogue the essential and prominent feature of the performance<sup>3</sup>. The result was a radical change in the nature of tragedy : it became a dramatic instead of a lyrical form of art. During the greater part of his career Aeschylus was contented with two actors. Three at least out of his seven extant plays are written for performance by two actors only<sup>4</sup>. This limitation upon the number of the performers necessitated great simplicity in the construction of the play, since it was impossible for more than two personages to take part in the dialogue at the same time. Hence the earlier plays of Aeschylus, though essentially dramatic in comparison with anything which preceded them, are simple in plot and lyrical in tone when compared with the

<sup>1</sup> Diog. Laert. iii. 56 ὥσπερ δὲ τὸ παλαιὸν ἐν τῇ τραγῳδίᾳ πρότερον μὲν μόνος ὁ χορὸς διεδραμάτιζεν, ὕστερον δὲ Θεσπὶς ἓνα ὑποκριτὴν ἐξεύρεν ὑπὲρ τοῦ διαναπαύεσθαι τὸν χορόν.

<sup>2</sup> Suidas v. Θεσπὶς.

<sup>3</sup> Aristot. Poet. c. 4 καὶ τό τε τῶν ὑποκριτῶν πλῆθος ἐξ ἑνὸς εἰς δύο πρῶτος Αἰσχύλος ἤγαγε, καὶ τὰ τοῦ χοροῦ ἡλάττωσε, καὶ τὸν λόγον πρωταγωνιστῇ παρεσκεύασεν.

<sup>4</sup> Viz. the Supplices, Persae, and

Seven against Thebes. In the concluding scene of the Seven the part of Ismene would not be taken by a regular actor. Apparently the opening scene of the Prometheus requires three actors, unless we are to adopt the very improbable supposition that the person of Prometheus was represented by a wooden figure, which was nailed to the rock, and from behind which the protagonist spoke the part.

tragedies of his successors. The different scenes rather serve to unfold a series of pictures than to develop a complicated plot. Descriptive speeches take the place of animated dialogue. Sophocles added greatly to the capacities of the drama by introducing a third actor<sup>1</sup>. He was thus enabled to give much greater variety and spirit to the dialogue. In his hands for the first time tragedy became essentially dramatic, and the lyrical element was thrust still further into the background. The innovation of Sophocles was adopted by Aeschylus in his later years, and the Oresteian trilogy—the last and most elaborate of his works—requires three actors. Under Sophocles tragedy received its full development. The number of actors in tragedy was henceforward limited to three.

The satyric drama was intimately connected with tragedy, and the number of actors was apparently the same. Thus the Cyclops of Euripides, the only extant satyric play, requires three actors. In the Naples vase-painting, which represents the performers in a satyric play, three actors are depicted<sup>2</sup>. It is true that the Alcestis of Euripides, which was performed in place of the usual satyric drama, only requires two actors. But the number in this case was probably due to the choice of the poet, and not to any official regulation. In regard to comedy, very little is known as to the steps by which it was developed. The source of comedy lay in the phallic songs performed at the festivals of Dionysus. The dramatic element originated in the interludes by the leader of the chorus. The process of development must have been much the same as in tragedy; but the names of the persons who introduced actors and dialogue into comedy were forgotten even in Aristotle's

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. Poet. c. 4; Diog. Laert. iii. 56; vit. Soph.; Suidas v. *Σοφοκλῆς*. The Life of Aeschylus assigns the introduction of the third actor to Aeschylus, but adds that Dicaearchus ascribed it to Sophocles. The passage in Themistius (xxvi. p. 316 D) *καὶ οὐ προσέχομεν Ἀριστοτέλει ὅτι τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ὁ χορὸς εἰσὶν ἦδεν εἰς τοὺς θεοὺς, Θέσπις δὲ πρόλογόν τε καὶ ῥῆσιν ἐξέειπεν, Αἰσχύ-*

*λος δὲ τρίτον ὑποκριτὴν* (a. l. *τρίτον ὑποκριτὰς*) is doubtful, and cannot weigh against Aristotle's definite statement in the Poetics. The balance of evidence is distinctly in favour of the conclusion that the third actor was first introduced by Sophocles.

<sup>2</sup> Baumeister, Denkmäler, No. 422; Eur. Cyclops 197 foll.



time. The only piece of information upon the subject is to the effect that Cratinus was the first to limit the number of actors to three, and that before his time there was no regulation as to the number of persons introduced upon the stage. After the time of Cratinus there were no further innovations, and the number of the actors in comedy was permanently fixed at three<sup>1</sup>.

This number was never exceeded either in comedy or in tragedy. All the extant Greek plays could be performed by three actors. It is sometimes said that the *Oedipus Coloneus* of Sophocles requires four actors; but this is not the case. Although there are several occasions on which Ismene appears upon the stage simultaneously with three other personages, still on each of these occasions she does not say a word, but is merely a mute figure. It is evident therefore that during this portion of the play her part was taken by a 'super,' while at the beginning and end of the play, where she had speeches to make, the part was acted by the tritagonist<sup>2</sup>. It might at first sight appear that the comedies of Aristophanes require more than three actors; but investigations have shown that there is not one of his plays which could not be performed by this number, assisted by a supply of 'supers'<sup>3</sup>.

The smallness in the number of the actors necessarily limited the capacities of the Greek drama. It made it impossible for life to be represented upon the stage with the realism of a modern play. Mute personages—such as officers, soldiers, and servants—might be introduced in any number; but the characters taking part in the dialogue could never at any one time exceed three. The realistic effect produced by a promiscuous conversation between a large group of persons was impossible upon the Greek stage. Sometimes a certain awkwardness was caused by the limitation in the number of the performers. In the extant Greek dramas occasions are not infrequent where a fourth actor might have been a great advantage. For instance,

<sup>1</sup> Arist. Poet. cc. 4, 5; Anon. de Comoed. (Dindf. Prolegom. de Comoed. p. 27); Diomedes, p. 490 K.

<sup>2</sup> Soph. O. C. 1117 ff., 1249 ff., 1500 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. Beer, über die Zahl der Schauspieler bei Aristophanes, Leipz. 1844.

there is the exciting scene at the end of the *Orestes* of Euripides. Orestes is seen upon the roof of the palace threatening to kill Hermione, and Pylades is standing beside him. Menelaus from below makes a piteous appeal to Pylades, but Pylades says not a single word in reply, but leaves Orestes to answer for him. His silence is very unnatural, and is only to be accounted for by the fact that there was no actor to spare, and therefore the poet could not put any words in his mouth. Two of the actors were already employed in playing the parts of Orestes and Menelaus, and the third was required for Apollo, who comes on the scene immediately afterwards. Consequently the part of Pylades had to be taken by a mute personage. Then again there is the scene at the end of the *Electra* of Euripides. Orestes has heard his fate, and as he leaves the stage he bids farewell to Pylades, and urges him to marry his sister Electra. Pylades maintains a stolid silence, and the Dioscuri reply on his behalf. Here again his silence is due to the necessities of the case. The three actors with whom the poet was supplied were all employed, and Pylades was merely a dumb figure. Similar instances of awkward and almost ludicrous silence on the part of certain characters will occur to all readers of the Greek drama. But they are not so numerous as might have been expected, and it is astonishing to find how successfully the Greek drama, keeping within its own peculiar limits, was able to accomplish its ends with three actors only.

There were several advantages in the smallness of the number. In the first place the dialogue gained in clearness and simplicity, owing to the fewness of the persons taking part in it. This simplicity was especially well suited to the severe and statuesque character of Greek tragedy, in which the rapid movement of a dialogue between a large number of persons would have been altogether inappropriate. In the extant Greek tragedies even the three actors permitted by custom are used with considerable reserve. They are never allowed to join promiscuously in the dialogue for any length of time. Whenever three characters are upon the stage, it will be found that in most cases one of them stands by in

silence, while the other two carry on the dialogue. The two change from time to time, but it is only on rare occasions and for brief periods that all three converse promiscuously together. It appears, therefore, that the Greek tragic writers, so far from feeling the restriction upon the number of the actors as an impediment, did not even employ the number allowed by custom with as much freedom as they might have done. There was another obvious advantage in the restriction. As only three actors were needed, it was easy to ensure that they should all be performers of first-rate excellence. In modern times the large number of actors required constitutes a great difficulty. It is rare to see the subordinate characters in a play of Shakespeare even tolerably performed. The effect of the piece is spoiled by the feebleness of the princes, dukes, lords, and ladies who crowd the stage. In the Greek drama, owing to the limitation upon the number of the performers, this difficulty was avoided, and a high standard of excellence maintained throughout the play. It was all the more necessary, among the Greeks, to take some precaution of this kind, since the size of the theatre demanded unusual powers in the actor. In a modern theatre an actor, however poor, can at any rate usually be heard. But in the vast open-air theatre at Athens it required a man with an exceptionally clear and powerful voice to make himself audible to the vast multitude of spectators. It cannot have been an easy task to find actors who combined histrionic talent with voices of sufficient power, and if a large number had been required, there would have been great difficulty in meeting the demand. This consideration doubtless helped to ensure the continued observance of the rule as to the number of the actors.

The original Greek word for an actor was 'hypokrites.' Etymologically the word seems to have meant 'one who answers<sup>1</sup>.' According to the old grammarians the origin of

<sup>1</sup> Phot. v. ὑποκρίνεσθαι τὸ ἀποκρίνεσθαι οἱ παλαιοὶ καὶ ὁ ὑποκριτὴς ἐντεῦθεν, ὁ ἀποκρινόμενος τῷ χορῷ. So also Hesych. v. ὑποκρίνοιο, and Poll. iv.

123. Apollon. Lex. Hom. v. ὑποκρίναιτο· πρωταγωνιστοῦντος γὰρ τοῦ χοροῦ τὸ παλαιὸν οὗτοι ὥσπερ ἀποκριταὶ ᾗσαν, ἀποκρινόμενοι πρὸς τὸν χορόν.

the term was due to the fact that in the early drama, when the chorus played the principal part, the main function of the actor was to 'reply to the chorus.' This derivation of the word is very likely the correct one. In the times before Aeschylus, when there was only one actor, all the dialogue was necessarily carried on between the actor and the chorus. It is therefore not improbable that the duty of replying to the questions and remarks of the chorus may have been regarded as the salient feature in the performance of the actor, and have given rise to his name. In the course of the fourth century the old Attic word for an actor went out of use, and a new one was substituted. Henceforward actors were generally called 'artists,' or 'artists of Dionysus'¹.

As far as tragedy is concerned, the art of acting may be said to have commenced in the time of Thespis. But actors did not come into existence as a separate class until many years afterwards. Before the period of Aeschylus, when only a single actor was required, his part was taken by the poet. It is expressly said that Thespis was 'himself acting, according to ancient custom,' at that performance which excited the disapproval of Solon². But when a second actor was introduced by Aeschylus, then the actor's profession became of necessity distinct from that of the poet. For some time afterwards the poets continued to act occasionally in their own tragedies, side by side with the professional actors. But the practice went gradually out of fashion in the course of the earlier part of the fifth century. Aeschylus appears, from the statement in his Life, to have abandoned the stage even before the introduction of a second actor³. Sophocles was prevented from

¹ Demosth. Fals. Leg. § 192 πάντας τοὺς τεχνίτας συνήγαγεν; Aristot. Prob. xxx. 10 οἱ περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον τεχνῖται; Polyb. xvi. 21.

² Plut. Solon p. 95 C; Aristot. Rhet. iii. 1 ὑπεκρίνοντο γὰρ αὐτοὶ τὰς τραγῳδίας οἱ ποιηταὶ τὸ πρῶτον.

³ The words in the Life are ἐχρήσατο δ' ὑποκριτῇ πρῶτῳ μὲν Κλεάνδρῳ, ἔπειτα καὶ τὸν δεύτερον αὐτῷ προσήψε Μυνησκον τὸν Χαλκιδέα· τὸν δὲ τρίτον ὑπο-

κριτὴν αὐτὸς ἐξεύρεν, ὡς δὲ Δικαίαρχος ὁ Μεσσήνιος, Σοφοκλῆς. These words imply that he employed Mynniscus for the first time on the occasion of his introduction of a second actor; and that previously to this innovation, when only one actor was required, he had been accustomed to employ Cleander, instead of acting himself. He must, therefore, have given up acting before the production of the Suppliants, and

appearing as an actor by the weakness of his voice. It is true that he sometimes performed in public. In the *Thamyris* he played the harp, and in the *Nausicaa* he delighted the spectators by his skill with the ball. But it is not likely that on either of these occasions he took a regular actor's part. He probably appeared upon the scene merely as a mute character, in order to show his skill with the harp and the ball<sup>1</sup>. After the time of Sophocles there are no further instances of tragic poets performing in their own plays<sup>2</sup>. As to the early history of comic acting very little is known. Cratinus is mentioned as one of the old poets who were called 'dancers,' and it is therefore probable that he acted in his own comedies. Crates is said to have begun his career as an actor of Cratinus<sup>3</sup>. But after his time there is no certain instance of a comic poet appearing upon the stage. The professional actor was universally employed. The statement that Aristophanes acted the part of Cleon in the *Knights* is due to a misconception on the part of the scholiast<sup>4</sup>.

It appears then that it was in the beginning of the fifth century that the profession of the actor came into existence as a distinct occupation. It grew very rapidly in importance. At first the

considerably before the first appearance of Sophocles. The statement that Sophocles was the *first* dramatic poet to abandon acting in person can only be true to the extent that he was the first poet who never acted at all.

<sup>1</sup> Vit. Soph. *πρῶτον μὲν καταλύσας τὴν ὑπόκρισιν τοῦ ποιητοῦ διὰ τὴν ἰδίαν μικροφωνίαν*; Athen. p. 20 F; Eustath. Od. p. 1533.

<sup>2</sup> Müller (die griech. Bühnen. p. 184) states, on the authority of Zenob. Prov. v. 100, that Astydamas the Elder acted in his own tragedy, the *Parthenopaeus*. The words in Zenobius are *ἐνημερήσας ἐν τῇ ὑποκρίσει Παρθενοπαίου*. But this is merely a carelessness of expression, on which no stress can be laid. In the account given by Suidas (v. *σαντὴν ἐπαινεῖς*) of the same occurrence the expression is *ἐνημερήσαντι ἐπὶ τραγῳδίας διδασκαλία Παρθενοπαίου*. The Parthe-

nopaeus was really written by Astydamas the Younger. See the *Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, p. 430.

<sup>3</sup> Athen. p. 22 A; Schol. Aristoph. Equit. 534.

<sup>4</sup> Vit. Aristoph. p. 34 Dindf.; Arg. ii. Equit. The story arose from a misunderstanding of the phrase *καθίεναι τὸ δράμα δι' ἑαυτοῦ*. The *Knights* was the first play Aristophanes produced in his own name. See Meineke, *Frag. Com. Gr.* ii. 928 ff. Antiphanes is said (Müller, *die griech. Bühnen*. p. 184) to have acted one of his own comedies, the evidence being the inscription in Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 972 [*Ἀντιφάνη*]ς πέμ(πτος) Ἀνασφ(ο)μένους. [*ὑπεκρίνετο Ἀντιφάνης*]. But it is by no means certain that the name of the poet is rightly filled in as Antiphanes. Even if it is, it does not follow that the actor Antiphanes was the same person.

actors who took part in the competitions were regarded as mere subordinates, and had no share in the honours and rewards. But towards the middle of the century a change was made, and prizes began to be instituted for the best actors, as well as for the best poets. The names of the actors began to be recorded in the official lists of victors, side by side with those of the poets and choregi<sup>1</sup>. In the fourth century the actors sprang into still greater prominence. The art of acting tended to outshine the art of dramatic writing. An age of great actors succeeded to an age of great poets. The same phenomenon is not uncommon in the theatrical history of other nations. In England, for instance, a period of dramatic productiveness was followed by a period of sterility and insignificance, and from the time of Garrick downwards the names of the great actors, who have made themselves famous by interpreting the masterpieces of Shakespeare, are more conspicuous than the names of dramatic authors. In Athens the fourth century was the period when acting was brought to the greatest perfection. To such an extent had the importance of the actor's profession increased, that in Aristotle's time a play depended more for its success upon the skill of the actor than upon the genius of the poet. The effect upon dramatic writing was most pernicious. The poets began to write their plays with a view to exhibiting the capacities of the actors. Scenes which had no connexion with the plot were introduced for the sole purpose of enabling an actor to make a display of his talents<sup>2</sup>. Sophocles is said by one of the old grammarians to have been guilty of the same sort of practice. But if there is any truth in the statement, the evil effects are not very apparent in the extant tragedies<sup>3</sup>. The charge might be brought with more plausibility against the monodies of Euripides, which are often feeble from a literary point of view, but would enable an actor with a fine voice to make a great impression. However it was not until the fourth

<sup>1</sup> See chap. i. p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Aristot. Poet. c. 9 λέγει δ' ἐπεισοδιώδη μῦθον ἐν ᾧ τὰ ἐπεισόδια μετ' ἄλλα οὐτ' εἰκὸς οὐτ' ἀνάγκη εἶναι, τοιαῦτα δὲ ποιοῦνται ὑπὸ μὲν τῶν φαύλων

ποιητῶν δι' αὐτοῦς, ὑπὸ δὲ τῶν ἀγαθῶν διὰ τοὺς ὑποκριτάς: Rhet. iii. 1 μείζον δύνανται νῦν τῶν ποιητῶν οἱ ὑποκριταί.

<sup>3</sup> Vit. Soph. p. 3 Dindf.

century that the influence of the actors became so universal as to inflict distinct injury upon the art of dramatic writing.

The selection of the necessary number of actors for each dramatic performance was, except in very early times, undertaken by the state. The details in connexion with this arrangement have already been discussed in a previous chapter<sup>1</sup>. The main points may be recapitulated here. During the early part of the fifth century the poets chose their own actors. Certain poets and certain actors were permanently associated together. But as the actors increased in importance, they were placed on the same footing as the poets and choregi, and were appointed by the state. They were then distributed among the poets by lot. In the course of the fourth century the use of the lot was discontinued in the case of tragedy, and a new arrangement was adopted, which was rendered possible by the fact that each tragic poet exhibited several tragedies at the same time. Under the new system each tragedy was performed by a different actor, and in this way all the competing poets enjoyed in turn the services of all the actors. In comedy, as each poet exhibited only a single play, the old system of distribution by lot was retained. If an actor was engaged for one of the great Athenian festivals, and failed to put in an appearance, he was fined by the state. On one occasion Athenodorus, the great tragic actor, was hired to perform at the City Dionysia. But he failed to keep his engagement, as he preferred to be present and perform at the festivities held by Alexander the Great in Phoenicia, after his return from Egypt. A heavy fine was inflicted upon him in consequence, but the fine was paid by Alexander<sup>2</sup>.

### § 2. *The distribution of the Parts among the Actors.*

It has already been shown that the number of the actors in a Greek play was limited to three. These three actors had distinctive names, according to the prominence of the parts which they took. The principal actor was called the protagonist ;

<sup>1</sup> See chap. ii. p. 79 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Plat. Alex. p. 681 E.

next in importance came the deuteragonist; the tritagonist played the inferior characters<sup>1</sup>. The importance of the protagonist on the Greek stage has been pointed out already<sup>2</sup>. In the ordinary theatrical language of the time a play was said to be 'acted by the protagonist,' as if the other actors were of no account. The protagonist was publicly appointed by the state, but was allowed to choose the second and third actor at his own discretion. In the same way the prize for acting at each festival was confined to the protagonists. The other performers had nothing to do with it. In tragedy more especially the protagonist was a person of the greatest importance; the deuteragonist and tritagonist were placed in a very subordinate position. The whole structure of a Greek tragedy was designed with the object of fixing the interest upon some grand central figure. The significance of the other characters consisted mainly in their capacity to excite the passions and draw forth the sentiments of the leading personage. This being so, it was essential that the protagonist should concentrate the interest upon himself; otherwise the harmony and balance of the play would have been destroyed. Hence the subordinate actors were strictly forbidden to attempt to outshine the protagonist. They were called upon to exercise the greatest self-denial. Even if they had finer voices than the protagonist, they were made to moderate and restrain their powers, so as to allow the protagonist to retain the superiority, and rivet the attention of the spectators upon the central character<sup>3</sup>. The jealousy of protagonists towards their fellow-actors is well exemplified by the story about Theodorus, who had a theory that the first speaker in a play always attracted the sympathies of the audience, and therefore would never allow any other actor, however inferior, to appear upon the stage before himself<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Plut. Rep. Ger. 817 A; Dem. Fals. Leg. § 10; Suidas v. Σοφοκλῆς.

<sup>2</sup> See chap. i. p. 58, ch. ii. p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> Cic. Div. in Caecil. § 48 'ut in actoribus Graecis fieri videmus, saepe illum, qui est secundarum aut tertiarum partium, quum possit aliquanto clarius

dicere, quam ipse primarum, multum summittere, ut ille princeps quam maxime excellat,' &c.

<sup>4</sup> Aristot. Pol. vii. 17. The story about Theodorus has caused some difficulty. Does it mean that Theodorus, besides taking the principal character,



The distribution of the different parts among the actors was undertaken by the poet if the play was a new one<sup>1</sup>. But if an old play was being reproduced, the matter would be arranged by the protagonist who had the management of the performance. The three actors between them filled all the parts in a play, appearing in various characters successively. Such a practice was rendered possible by the use of masks. An actor had only to change his mask and his dress, and he could then re-appear in a new character. Changes of this kind could be effected in a very few moments, as is shown by the one or two traditions on the subject which have been preserved by the ancient scholiasts. For example, in the opening scene of the *Phoenissae* Jocasta speaks the prologue, and then leaves the stage. Thereupon Antigone and an old attendant mount by a staircase on to the roof of the palace, in order to view the Argive army encamped outside the walls. The scholiast tells us that the protagonist played the parts both of Jocasta and of Antigone. It was necessary, therefore, after Jocasta had left the stage, that there should be a slight interval before Antigone appeared upon the palace roof, to give the actor time to change his mask and dress. Euripides managed this by making the attendant come out alone upon the roof at first, and look about him to see that the coast is clear, while he addresses a few words to Antigone, who is still inside the

also played the part of the person who made the first speech in the tragedy? If so, he would have been debarred from acting some of the most popular tragedies of the time. For instance, the actor who took the part of Electra in the play of Sophocles could not act the part of the paedagogus, since Electra comes on the stage as soon as the paedagogus leaves it. There would be the same difficulty about the *Orestes*, the *Medea*, and many other plays. It has been suggested that the reference is to some preliminary announcement of the title of the play, which Theodorus preferred to make himself, instead of leaving it to a subordinate. Such announcements were made in Greek

theatres in later times (cp. Lucian, *Pseudolog.* 19; Heliod. *Aethiop.* viii. 17; Synesius, *περί προποίας*, p. 128 D), and may have been customary in Athens, or in other parts of Greece, in the time of Theodorus. But it is extremely improbable that the reference is to any such practice. The audience would hardly pay much attention to the voice of the person who announced the name of the coming play. The meaning is probably that Theodorus used to take the part of the character which spoke first, whenever it was possible to do so. In such plays as the *Electra* it would be impossible.

<sup>1</sup> Alciphron, *Epist.* iii. 71.

palace. When he sees that all is safe, he calls on Antigone to follow after him, and she thereupon mounts the staircase, and appears to the spectators. The speech of the attendant, while he is looking about upon the roof, consists of only fifteen iambic lines. Thus the space of time required to speak fifteen lines was enough to enable an actor to change from one character to another<sup>1</sup>. There is a further instance which shows that even less time was necessary. In the *Choephoroi*, when Aegisthus is murdered, a servant rushes out upon the stage and calls to Clytaemnestra. As Clytaemnestra comes out, he apparently runs back into the palace. Clytaemnestra speaks five lines, and then Orestes hastens out of the palace, followed by Pylades. In the scene which ensues Pylades has three lines to speak; and the scholiast says that his part was taken by the servant who had just left the stage, so as to avoid the necessity of four actors. The servant must therefore have changed his mask in a very few moments<sup>2</sup>. As such rapid changes were possible, a great variety of characters might be introduced in the course of a play, in spite of the restriction that more than three characters could not take part in the dialogue at the same time.

In the distribution of parts the protagonist took the principal character. The parts of Oedipus, Electra, and Antigone, in the plays of the same name by Sophocles, are specially mentioned as having been acted by celebrated protagonists. Orestes in the play of Euripides is also described as the part of the protagonist<sup>3</sup>. Usually, as in the above instances, the chief personage gave the name to the piece. But this was not always the case. In the *Oenomaus* of Sophocles the part of Oenomaus was played by the tritagonist Aeschines. In the *Cresphontes* of Euripides the principal character was Merope, and was taken by Theodorus. The part of *Cresphontes* fell to Aeschines as tritagonist<sup>4</sup>. It does not therefore follow that the character which gave the name to a play was necessarily

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Eur. *Phoen.* 93.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. Aesch. *Choeph.* 900.

<sup>3</sup> Aul. Gell. vii. 5; Stob. *Flor.* 97.  
28; Dem. *Fals. Leg.* § 246; Strattis ap.

Meineke, *Frag. Com. Gr.* ii. p. 763.

<sup>4</sup> Hesych. v. ἀρσενικός Οἰνόμαος;  
Dem. de Cor. § 180; Aelian, *Var. Hist.*  
xiv. 40.

the leading one. In the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus most likely the protagonist played the part of Clytaemnestra, as this is certainly the most impressive character in the play, though not the one with which the spectators are in sympathy. Besides playing the leading part the protagonist had also to take his share of the subordinate characters when he could be spared. It has already been mentioned that in the *Phoenissae* of Euripides the protagonist appeared in the part of Antigone, as well as in that of Jocasta. At times he took even the smallest characters if the necessities of the play demanded it. Plutarch states that the protagonist, in the part of a messenger or an attendant, often gained more applause than the actor who bore the sceptre and the crown<sup>1</sup>. It was, in fact, the chief advantage of the Greek system that even the subordinate characters were played with as much excellence as the more important ones. The tritagonist took what in modern times would be called the 'heavy' parts. It was his special privilege, as Demosthenes remarks, to play the tyrant and the sceptred monarch<sup>2</sup>. Aeschines, in his career as tritagonist, often had to act gloomy tyrants of this kind, such as Creon, Cresphontes, and Oenomaus. Such characters did not require great powers in the actor. There was no pathos to be excited, no play of conflicting emotions to be exhibited. All that was necessary was a powerful voice, and a capacity for declaiming verses. Most likely for the same reason the tritagonist usually spoke the prologues, which also did not require much more in the actor than good powers of elocution. Thus the ghost of Polydorus, which speaks the prologue in the *Hecuba* of Euripides, was acted by Aeschines as tritagonist<sup>3</sup>. The deuteragonist took the parts which, in point of interest, were intermediate between the leading characters, and the heavy parts which fell to the tritagonist. There are not, however, any traditions as to particular characters having been played by the deuteragonist. Attempts have been made in modern times to assign the characters in the extant Greek dramas to the protagonist,

<sup>1</sup> Plut. *Lysand.* p. 466 D.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. *Fals. Leg.* § 247.

<sup>3</sup> Dem. *l. c.*, de Cor. §§ 180, 267.

deuteragonist, and tritagonist respectively<sup>1</sup>. Such speculations are interesting, in so far as they show that all the existing plays could be perfectly well performed by three actors. Otherwise they are not of very great value. There is generally no difficulty in deciding which was the leading character. But it is obvious that the subordinate parts might be distributed in various ways; and no doubt the arrangement differed at different periods. There are no traditions on the subject in addition to those already mentioned. Any attempt, therefore, to reproduce the exact arrangement adopted at a particular period must depend more or less upon conjecture.

### § 3. *Extra Performers.*

For every Greek play a chorus was provided by the choregus, and three actors were supplied by the state. But in most plays a certain number of additional performers were required. The parts which these extra performers had to fill may be divided, roughly speaking, into three classes. In the first place there were the various mute personages, who simply appeared upon the stage, and did nothing more. The second class consisted of minor characters with only a few words to say. In these cases extra performers were required, either because the regular actors were already occupied, or because the part was that of a boy or girl, which the regular actor would be unable to take. Thirdly, in many cases a small subordinate chorus was required, in addition to the ordinary one. The general name for the persons who undertook these parts was 'parachoregemata<sup>2</sup>.' This word obviously means something

<sup>1</sup> K. F. Hermann, *De distributione personarum in trag. graec.*, 1842; Richter, *Die Vertheilung der Rollen der griech. Tragödie*, 1842; Croiset, *Histoire de la Litt. grecq.*, iii. passim.

<sup>2</sup> As there is some doubt about the meaning of the word *παραχορήγημα*, it will be well to quote the passages where it occurs. They are (1) Schol. Aesch. Prom. 12 *ἐν παραχορήγηματι αὐτῷ εἰδωλοποιηθεῖσα Βία*. (2) Schol. Aesch.

Eum. 573 *ἐν παραχορήγηματι αὐτῷ εἰσιν οἱ Ἀρεοπαγῆται μηδαμῷ διαλεγόμενοι*.

(3) Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 211 *ταῦτα καλεῖται παραχορήγηματα, ἐπεὶ οὐχ ὀρῶνται ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ οἱ βάτραχοι, οὐδὲ ὁ χορὸς, ἀλλ' ἔσωθεν μμούνται τοὺς βατράχους; ὁ δὲ ἀληθὺς χορὸς ἐκ τῶν εὐσεβῶν νεκρῶν συνέστηκεν*. (4) Schol. Aristoph. Pax 113 *τὰ τοιαῦτα παραχορήγηματα καλοῦσιν, ὅσα νῦν τὰ παῖδια ποιεῖ καλοῦντα τὸν πατέρα' εἰτα πρὸς*

which is supplied by the choregus in addition to his ordinary expenditure. It follows, therefore, that the cost of the extra performers was borne by the choregus. Properly he was only responsible for the chorus; but if additional men were required, he had to supply them. This conclusion is confirmed by Plutarch's story of a certain tragic actor who was going to appear as a queen, but refused to proceed with the part, unless the choregus provided him with a train of female attendants<sup>1</sup>. Extra performers were especially necessary in the Old Comedy, in which a great number of characters appear upon the stage.

If songs had to be sung, or words spoken, behind the scenes, by persons out of sight of the audience, these persons were called 'paraskenia<sup>2</sup>.' In many cases their part could be taken by members of the chorus, and in this way no extra expense would fall upon the choregus.

It remains to consider more in detail the three classes of 'parachoregemata.' The mute personages appeared most frequently in the shape of attendants, body-guards, crowds of people, and so on. The Oedipus Rex opens with a number of suppliants

οὐδὲν ἔτι τούτοις χρήσεται. (5) Poll. iv. 109 ὁπότε μὴν ἀντὶ τετάρτου ὑποκριτοῦ δέοι τινα τῶν χορευτῶν εἰπεῖν ἐν αἰθρῇ, παρασκήνιον καλεῖται τὸ πρᾶγμα, ὡς ἐν 'Αγαμέμνονι Αἰσχύλου' εἰ δὲ τέταρτος ὑποκριτής τι παραφθέγγεται, τοῦτο παραχορήγημα ὀνομάζεται, καὶ πεπράχθαι φασὶν αὐτὸ ἐν Μέρμονι Αἰσχύλου. The first and second instances refer to mute personages, the third instance refers to an extra chorus, the fourth to extra performers who say only a few words upon the stage. It is therefore quite clear that the word παραχορήγημα included all classes of extra performers, as distinct from the actors and the chorus. There are no grounds for excluding the mute personages from the class of παραχορήγηματα, as Müller (die griech. Bühnen. p. 179) and others have done. Pollux appears to make the distinction between παρασκήνιον and παραχορήγημα lie in the fact that the

former sang, the latter spoke. The distinction is a foolish one, and was probably due to Pollux's habit of generalising from one particular instance. The word παρασκήνιον, in its present sense, only occurs in the passage of Pollux. To judge from the etymology of the word, it most likely denoted performers behind the scenes. The words ἐν 'Αγαμέμνονι Αἰσχύλου' in the passage of Pollux are corrupt, the corruption arising from the words ἐν Μέρμονι Αἰσχύλου which follow. There is no παρασκήνιον in the Agamemnon. The reference cannot be to the speech of Pylades in the Choephoroi (vv. 900-902), because (1) the Choephoroi could not be called the Agamemnon, (2) the part of Pylades was taken by one of the regular actors, as the scholiast ad loc. informs us.

<sup>1</sup> Plut. Phocion, p. 750 C.

<sup>2</sup> See note 2 on the previous page.

kneeling at the altar before the palace of the king. In the Choephoroi Orestes and Pylades are accompanied by attendants. The judgment scene in the Eumenides requires twelve performers to play the parts of the members of the Areopagus. In the Agamemnon, when the king and Cassandra arrive in the chariot, servants stand ready to spread carpets beneath their feet<sup>1</sup>. Probably in many other instances great personages were accompanied by attendants, although there is no special reference to them in the play. Not infrequently more prominent characters appeared upon the stage as mute figures. Pylades says nothing throughout the Electra of Sophocles and the Electra of Euripides. In the latter play one of the Dioscuri must also have been a dumb figure, since two actors were already upon the stage when the Dioscuri make their appearance. The person of Force in the Prometheus Vinctus is another example. A very frequent occasion for the employment of mute characters was in pathetic scenes between parents and their children. The children appear as silent figures, but give occasion for touching speeches by their parents. There is an example in the Ajax of Sophocles, where Ajax addresses his son Eurysaces. But the instances in Euripides are much more frequent. There is the celebrated scene in the Medea, where Medea half relents at the sight of her children. There is the address of Megara to her children in the Hercules Furens. Other examples are to be found in the introduction of Manto, the daughter of Teiresias, in the Phoenissae, and of Polymestor's children in the Hecuba<sup>2</sup>. Mute figures were also very useful in occasionally personating one of the regular characters of the play, when the actor of the character was temporarily required for another purpose. It has already been pointed out that in the middle of the Oedipus Coloneus the part of Ismene is played by a dumb personage, to enable the previous actor of the part to appear in another character. One of the best instances of this practice is in the final scene of the Orestes, in which most of the prominent characters are brought upon the

<sup>1</sup> Aesch. Choeph. 713, Eum. 678 ff., Agam. 908.

<sup>2</sup> Soph. Aj. 544; Eur. Med. 1021, Herc. Fur. 454, Phoen. 834, Hecub. 978.

stage together, after the fashion of a modern drama. But only three of them can speak: Helen, Hermione, Electra, and Pylades are all mute figures. The silence of Pylades is especially unnatural. In cases of this kind an attempt is made to produce effects which were hardly compatible with the limited resources of Greek tragedy.

The second class of extra performers took all those minor parts in which there was a certain amount of speaking or singing, but which it was impossible for the regular actors to take. In tragedy such performers were mostly required for the boys' parts, which were unsuitable for grown up actors. Euripides was especially fond of introducing boys upon the stage. In the *Alcestis* Eumelus bewails his mother's death in a short ode. Another example is the mournful dialogue between Andromache and her little son Molossus<sup>1</sup>. In the Old Comedy these additional actors were frequently needed to perform small parts at times when the three regular actors were already on the stage. Examples are very numerous. There are the daughters of Trygaeus in the *Peace*, and the daughters of the Megarian in the *Acharnians*. The herald and Pseudartabas are additional examples from the *Acharnians*<sup>2</sup>.

In the third place an extra chorus was sometimes required. The Propompi in the *Eumenides*, and the chorus of boys in the *Wasps*, both appear side by side with the regular chorus, and must therefore have been personated by extra performers. An additional chorus, consisting of shepherds, was also required in the *Alexander* of Euripides<sup>3</sup>. Sometimes the extra chorus was not visible to the spectators, but sang behind the scenes. In such cases the singing might be done by members of the regular chorus, if they had not yet entered the orchestra. Examples are to be found in the chorus of frogs in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, and Agathon's chorus in the *Thesmophoriazusae*<sup>4</sup>. Both these choruses were behind the scenes, and would therefore come under the class called 'paraskenia.'

<sup>1</sup> Eur. *Alc.* 393, *Androm.* 504.

<sup>2</sup> Aristoph. *Pax* 114, *Acharn.* 43, 94, 729.

<sup>3</sup> Aesch. *Eum.* 1032; Aristoph. *Vesp.* 248; Schol. Eur. *Hipp.* 58.

<sup>4</sup> Aristoph. *Ran.* 209, *Thesm.* 104.

Their part would be taken by members of the regular chorus. In the opening scene of the *Hippolytus* a band of huntsmen sing a short ode to Artemis upon the stage. Immediately after their disappearance the regular chorus, consisting of women of Troezen, enters the orchestra. In this case the huntsmen cannot have been personated by members of the regular chorus; but it is possible that the singing was done by the chorus behind the scenes, while the huntsmen were represented by mute figures<sup>1</sup>.

#### § 4. *Costume of the Tragic Actors.*

To return to the subject of the actors. The next point to be discussed is their costume, and general appearance upon the stage. First, as to the tragic actors. The dress of the actors in tragedy was always entirely distinct from that of the chorus. The chorus consisted originally of satyrs, the half-human followers of Dionysus. Later on it came to be composed in most cases of ordinary citizens, and was dressed accordingly. But the actors represented from the first the gods and heroes of the old mythology. For them a different costume was required. The practice of the Greeks in regard to this costume was totally opposed to all modern notions upon the subject. Historical accuracy and archaeological minuteness in the mounting of a play were matters of complete indifference to the Greeks. Accordingly, when bringing these heroic characters upon the stage, they never made any attempt to produce an accurate imitation of the costume of the Homeric period. At the same time they were not content that the heroes and gods of their tragedy should appear upon the scene in the garments of ordinary life. Such an arrangement would have been inconsistent with the ideal character of Greek tragedy. A special dress was therefore employed, similar to that of common life, but more flowing and dignified. The garments were dyed with every variety of brilliant colour. The bulk of the actor was increased by padding his chest and limbs, and placing

<sup>1</sup> Eur. *Hipp.* 61.



huge wooden soles under his feet. Masks were employed in which every feature was exaggerated, to give superhuman dignity and terror to the expression. In this way a conventional costume was elaborated, which continued for centuries to be the regular dress of the tragic actors. All the leading characters in a Greek tragedy were dressed in this fashion, with only such slight variations and additions as the particular case required.

The origin of this tragic costume is a subject about which very little is known. According to the later Greek tradition it was invented almost entirely by Aeschylus<sup>1</sup>. But this is probably an exaggeration. Aeschylus was no doubt mainly instrumental in developing and improving the costume, and giving it a definite shape. But that the whole idea of it was his own creation is hardly credible. Most likely it had existed, though in a less elaborate form, long before his time. As for its origin, the most plausible view seems to be that it was derived from the old traditional garb of the Bacchic cultus, worn by Dionysus himself and by his chief attendants<sup>2</sup>. Several indications point in this direction. In early works of art Dionysus and his followers often appear in a long flowing robe, not unlike that of the tragic stage. They also wear a tall hunting boot, which was sometimes called the cothurnus, and which may have been the prototype from which the tragic cothurnus was developed. The custom of disguising the features with a mask or some similar device was always a regular institution in the mummeries connected with the Bacchic worship. The old comic actors, before the invention of the theatrical mask, used to smear their faces with wine, or cover them with fig-leaves. Masks were regularly worn in the processions of Dionysus down to the latest times. The Latin peasantry, at their Bacchic festivals, used to cover their faces with masks made out of the bark of trees<sup>3</sup>. All these facts are in favour of the conclusion that the

<sup>1</sup> Athen. p. 21 E; Hor. A. P. 278; Philostrat. vit. Apoll. vi. 11; Cramer, Anecd. Par. i. p. 19; Evanth. de trag. et com. (Gronov. Thesaur. viii. p. 1683); Suidas v. Αἰσχύλος.

<sup>2</sup> See Crusius, Philologus, 1889, p. 703.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Nub. 296; Suidas v. θπλαυβος; Plut. Cupid. Divit. 527 D; Verg. Georg. ii. 387.

tragic dress, with its mask, its cothurnus, and its flowing robe, was not so much the invention of the fifth century, as a development from the old festal costume<sup>1</sup>. This theory has also the advantage of ascribing a parallel origin to the dresses of the chorus and those of the actors. While the chorus, in the older drama, appeared in the guise of satyrs or rustic votaries of Dionysus, the actors, whose part was more dignified, assumed the garb of Dionysus himself and of his chief attendants. One ancient tradition asserts that the tragic dress was copied in later times by the hierophants and torch-bearers at the Eleusinian mysteries<sup>2</sup>. Some scholars have twisted this tradition round, and suggested that it was from the hierophants and torch-bearers that the first notion of the tragic dress was borrowed. But neither view can be regarded as probable. That the two costumes were not dissimilar seems to be proved by the existence of the tradition referred to. But it is unlikely that the garb used at the performances in honour of one deity should have been borrowed from the cultus of another. The resemblance may be better explained by the supposition that both costumes were ancient religious dresses, used in the worship of Dionysus and Demeter respectively.

Whatever may have been the origin of the tragic costume, there is no doubt that the form of it which eventually prevailed upon the Greek stage dates from the time of Aeschylus. His creative genius revolutionised every department of Greek

<sup>1</sup> Bethe (*Prolegomena*, pp. 35-46) finds an additional proof of this theory in the Bologna vase (cp. Dümmler, *Rhein. Museum*, 1888, p. 355). In this vase Dionysus is represented sitting in a boat-shaped car, with a satyr playing a flute on each side of him. The car is drawn by two satyrs, and two others are leading an ox. A boy and four women follow behind. Bethe thinks this scene was part of an old tragic performance; that the single actor of the period always played the part of Dionysus, and therefore naturally wore his costume. He also thinks the car was the prototype of the later stage,

and is identical with the wagons in which Thespis is said to have carried about his tragedies (*Hor. A. P.* 276). Unfortunately for these theories there is nothing to show that the procession depicted on the vase had any connexion with a dramatic performance. Such processions with Dionysus in a boat-shaped car are known to have existed in other parts of Greece (*Philostrat. vit. Soph. i.* 25; cp. *Crusius, Philologus*, 1889, p. 209); and though interesting as illustrations of the Bacchic mythology, they throw no light on the early history of the drama.

<sup>2</sup> *Athen. p.* 21 E.

tragedy. It was he who transformed it into an essentially dramatic species of art, and gave it the characteristics of grandeur and terror. It was necessary to make a corresponding improvement in the dresses of the actors, and this reform also was effected by Aeschylus. The type of costume which he gradually developed was so well adapted to its purpose, that it continued unchanged in its principal characteristics throughout the remaining history of Greek tragedy. Subsequent generations, while making various small additions and alterations, never altogether abandoned the original design. Our knowledge of the subject is derived partly from the descriptions



FIG. 15.

of Pollux and others, partly from works of art. Few of these works, unfortunately, are of early date. There is the Naples vase, belonging to the end of the fifth century, and depicting the performers in a satyric play. The two actors who take the heroic parts in this performance (Fig 22) are dressed more or less closely in the tragic style. There is also a votive relief (Fig. 15) from the Peiraeus, of the early fourth century, in which three tragic actors are depicted in stage costume, two of them with their masks in their hands<sup>1</sup>. But the work in this relief is so bare and devoid of detail, that it adds little to our knowledge. The Andromeda vase, of the same date, exhibits Andromeda

<sup>1</sup> See, on the subject of this relief, Robert, *Athen. Mittheil.* 1882, p. 389 foll.

chained to a rock, with Perseus and other figures on each side of her, and dressed in a costume which was evidently suggested by that of tragedy, though it is not a complete theatrical dress<sup>1</sup>. Numerous vases from Magna Graecia, belonging mostly to the fourth century, represent scenes out of tragedies<sup>2</sup>. But these too are not portrayed as theatrical scenes; and the costumes of the characters, though often resembling those of the tragic stage, cannot be regarded as regular actors' costumes. Still, all these paintings are valuable, as exhibiting in a general way some of the main features of the tragic dress. Apart from examples of the above kind, the works of art on which we have to depend are all of late date, and mostly of Italian origin<sup>3</sup>. But Greek tragedies were commonly performed in Italy even in imperial times; and Roman tragedy was in all respects a mere reproduction of the Greek. Hence delineations of tragic scenes and figures, though Italian in origin, present the characteristics of the Greek stage. It would be unsafe to depend upon them for points of minute detail. But they correspond in the main with the descriptions of Pollux, and it is possible to obtain from them a fairly trustworthy picture of the general appearance of the Greek actors. The accompanying figure of a tragic actor (Fig. 16) is copied from an ivory statuette found in the ruins of a villa near Rieti<sup>4</sup>. On comparing together these various representations, which range in date over a period of five or six hundred years, it is interesting to find that they all bear a strong family resemblance to one another. The pictures of the tragic actor, whether found on Greek vases, Etruscan mosaics, or wall-paintings of Cyrene and Pompeii, obviously belong to one common type. In spite of considerable differences in point of detail, they portray the same general conception. This fact confirms the ancient tradition, that the costume of the tragic stage, in all its more important features, was definitely settled by Aeschylus in the course of the fifth century.

<sup>1</sup> See Bethe, *Jahrb. des Archaeol. Instituts*, 1896, p. 292 ff., and pl. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See especially the *Medea vase* (Baumeister, *Denkmäler*, no. 980). Copies of many of these vases are

given by Huddilston, in *Greek Tragedy in the Light of Vase-Paintings*, 1898.

<sup>3</sup> A list of them will be found in Müller, *Bühnen*, p. 226.

<sup>4</sup> From *Monumenti Inediti*, xi. 13.



FIG. 16.

To consider next the different parts of the tragic costume. The contrast between the ancient and the modern actor is marked by nothing so conspicuously as by the use of masks. These masks, or similar devices, were a regular feature in the old Dionysiac worship, and were probably inherited as such by the tragic stage, and not invented of set purpose. With the growth of tragedy they soon acquired a new character. Thespis, the earliest of tragic actors, is said at the commencement of his career to have merely painted his face with white lead or purslane. Later on he employed masks; but these were of a very simple character, consisting merely of linen, without paint or colouring. Choerilus introduced certain improvements which are not specified. Phrynichus set the example of using female masks<sup>1</sup>. Aeschylus was the first to employ painted masks, and to portray features of a dreadful and awe-inspiring character. Though not the inventor of the tragic mask, as some ancient writers assert, he was the first to give it that distinctive character from which in later times it never varied except in detail<sup>2</sup>. After the time of Aeschylus there is no further mention of any radical alterations or improvements in the manufacture of masks.

The use of masks is indissolubly connected with the style and character of Greek tragedy. In its origin, as we have pointed out, the custom was probably a religious one. But it had many advantages unconnected with religion. The mask is said to have added resonance to the actor's voice; and, this was a point of great importance in the vast theatres of the ancients<sup>3</sup>. Also without masks it would have been impossible for one actor to play several parts, or for men to play the parts of women. At the same time the practice had its inconvenient side. The Greek actor was deprived of any opportunity for displaying those powers of facial expression which are one of the chief excellencies in modern acting. It was only by his gestures that he could emphasise the meaning of what

<sup>1</sup> Suidas vv. Θέσπις, Χοίριλος, Φρύ-  
νιχος.

<sup>2</sup> Suidas v. Αἰσχύλος; Hor. A. P.

278; Evanth. de trag. et com. (Gronov.  
Thesaur. viii. p. 1683).

<sup>3</sup> Aul. Gell. v. 7.

he had to say: his features remained immovable. But niceties of facial expression would have been scarcely visible in the huge expanse of a Greek theatre. The tragic mask, on which were depicted in bold and striking lines the main traits in the character represented, was really much more effective, and could be seen by the most distant spectator. Then again it must have been difficult, if not impossible, for a Greek actor to delineate finely drawn shades of individual character. The masks necessarily ran in general types, such as that of the brutal tyrant, the crafty statesman, the suffering maiden, and so on. The acting would have to correspond. It would be difficult to imagine the part of Hamlet acted in a mask. But the characters of Greek tragedy were mostly types rather than individuals. The heroes and heroines were drawn in broad general outlines, and there was little attempt at delicate strokes of character-painting. The use of masks no doubt helped to give this particular bent to Greek tragedy.

Masks were generally made of linen. Cork and wood were occasionally used<sup>1</sup>. The mask covered the whole of the head, both in front and behind<sup>2</sup>. Caps were often worn underneath, to serve as a protection<sup>3</sup>. The white of the eye was painted on the mask, but the place for the pupil was left hollow, to enable the actor to see<sup>4</sup>. The expression of the tragic mask was gloomy and often fierce; the mouth was opened wide, to give a clear outlet to the actor's voice. One of the most characteristic features of the tragic mask was the *onkos*<sup>5</sup>. This was a cone-shaped prolongation of the upper part of the mask above the forehead, intended to give size and impressiveness to the face. The *onkos* was not used in every case, but only where dignity was to be imparted. It varied in size according to the character of the personage. The *onkos* of the tyrant was especially large; that of women was less than that of men. A character was not necessarily represented by the same mask throughout the piece.

<sup>1</sup> Poll. x. 167; Isidor. Orig. x. 119;

Suidas v. *Θέσμις*; Verg. Georg. ii. 387;

Prudent. c. Symmach. ii. 646.

<sup>2</sup> Aul. Gell. v. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Dem. Fals. Leg. § 256.

See fig. 23.

<sup>4</sup> Wieseler, Denkmäler, p. 42.

<sup>5</sup> Poll. iv. 133-135, 139.

The effects of misfortune or of accident had often to be depicted by a fresh mask. For instance, in the *Helen* of Euripides Helen returns upon the stage with her hair shorn off, and her cheeks pale with weeping. Oedipus, at the end of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles, is seen with blinded eyes and blood-stained face. In such cases a change of mask must have been necessary.

The number and variety of the masks used in tragedy may be seen from the accounts in Pollux. For the ordinary tragic personages there were regular masks of a stereotyped character. Pollux enumerates twenty-eight kinds<sup>1</sup>. His information was derived from Alexandrian sources, and his list represents the number of masks which were employed on the later Greek stage for the ordinary characters of tragedy. It is not likely that in the time of Sophocles or Euripides the use of masks was reduced so completely to a system as in the later period; but the descriptions in Pollux will give an adequate idea of the style of the masks used in earlier times. Of the twenty-eight masks described by Pollux six are for old men, eight for young men, three for attendants, and eleven for women. The principal features by which the different masks are discriminated from one another are the style of the hair, the colour of the complexion, the height of the *onkos*, and the expression of the eyes. To take a few examples. The strong and powerful man, such as the tyrant, has thick black hair and beard, a tall *onkos*, and a frown upon his brow. The man wasted by disease has fair hair, a pale complexion, and a smaller *onkos*. The handsome youth has fair ringlets, a light complexion, and bright eyes. The lover is distinguished by black hair and a pale complexion. The maiden in misfortune has her hair cut short in token of sorrow. The aged lady has white hair and a small *onkos*, and her complexion is rather pale. Attendants and messengers are marked by special characteristics. One of them wears a cap, another has a peaked beard, a third has a snub nose and hair drawn back. One sees from these examples how completely Greek tragedy was dominated by conventional rules, in this as in all other respects. As soon.

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 133-141.



as a personage entered the stage, his mask alone was enough to give the spectators a very fair conception of his character and position.

The twenty-eight tragic masks enumerated by Pollux were used for the ordinary characters of tragedy, and formed a regular part of the stock of the Greek stage-manager. But special masks were required when any unusual character was introduced. Pollux gives a long list of such masks<sup>1</sup>. In the first place there were numbers of mythological beings with strange attributes. Actaeon had to be represented with horns, Argo with a multitude of eyes. Evippe in the play of Euripides had the head of a mare. A special mask of this kind must have been required to depict Io with the ox-horns in the Prometheus Vinctus of Aeschylus. A second class of special masks was needed to represent allegorical figures such as Justice, Persuasion, Deceit, Jealousy. Of this kind are the figures of Death in the Alcestis of Euripides, and Frenzy in the Hercules Furens. Lastly there were personifications of cities, rivers, and mountains. Five specimens of ancient tragic masks are given on the next page. The first is the mask of a youth, the fifth that of a man; the second and third are probably masks of women. The fourth is an example of one of the special masks, and depicts Perseus with the cap of darkness upon his head<sup>2</sup>.

We come now to the dress of the tragic actors. Nothing is known as to the appearance of this dress in the time of Thespis and his immediate successors. Our information refers solely to the tragic costume as modified and developed by Aeschylus in the course of the fifth century. The object of Aeschylus in these innovations was to add fresh splendour to the costume, and make it worthy of the colossal beings by which his stage was peopled. For this purpose he

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 141, 142. Special masks were called *ἐκτικέα πρόσωπα*.

<sup>2</sup> The masks in fig. 17 are copied from Wieseler, Denkmäler, v. 20, 24, 26. The first is a marble, the second and third are from wall-paintings at Herculaneum.

The masks in fig. 18 are copied from the Archaeol. Zeitung for 1878. They are from wall-paintings at Pompeii. For a list of the various works of art illustrating the subject see Müller, Bühnen. p. 273.

employed various devices. Among these was the cothurnus, or tragic boot, which was intended to increase the stature of the



FIG. 17.

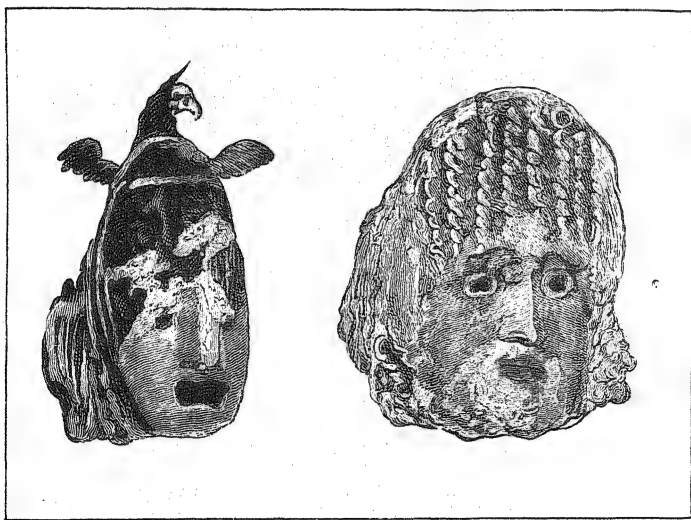


FIG. 18.

actors, and to give them an appearance of superhuman grandeur. It was a boot with a wooden sole of enormous thickness attached

to it. The wooden sole was painted in various colours<sup>1</sup>. According to some grammarians Aeschylus invented the boot altogether<sup>2</sup>; others say his innovation consisted merely in giving increased thickness to the sole, and so raising the height of the actors<sup>3</sup>. This latter view is probably the correct one. The original of the cothurnus, as already remarked, may very likely have been the hunting boot of the same name worn by Dionysus, which was a boot reaching high up the calf, but with soles of ordinary size. After the time of Aeschylus the tragic cothurnus continued to be a regular feature in theatrical costume down to the latest period of Greek and Roman tragedy<sup>4</sup>. It varied in height according to the dignity and position of the wearers, a king, for instance, being provided with a larger cothurnus than a mere attendant. In this way the physical stature of the persons upon the stage was made to correspond to their social position. In the accompanying illustration (Fig. 19), representing a tragic scene, the difference between the cothurnus of the servant and that of the hero is very conspicuous<sup>5</sup>. Whether the cothurnus was worn by all the characters in a tragedy, or only by the more important ones, is uncertain. There was another tragic boot called the 'krepis,' of a white colour, which was introduced by Sophocles, and used by the chorus as well as by the actors. Possibly this may have been a boot more like those of ordinary life than the cothurnus, and may have been worn by the subordinate characters<sup>6</sup>. The illustrations show that the cothurnus was rather a clumsy contrivance, and that it must have been somewhat inconvenient

<sup>1</sup> The name for the tragic boot in Greek was ἐμβάτης (Suid. v. Αἰσχύλος), ἐκρίβας (Lucian, Nero c. 9), or ἐκόθορνος (vit. Aesch.). Cothurnus was the regular name in Latin. Pollux (iv. 115) appears to be mistaken in calling ἐμβάτης the comic boot, in opposition to the notices in other grammarians. The sole of the cothurnus was of wood, as appears from Schol. Lucian, Epist. Saturn. 19. Works of art show that it was painted: see Wieseler, Denkmäler, vii., viii.; and cp. Ovid. Am. ii. 18. 15 'risit Amor pallamque meam

pictosque cothurnos.'

<sup>2</sup> Suidas v. Αἰσχύλος; Aristot. apud Themist. or. xxvi. p. 316; Philostrat., vit. Apoll. vi. 11; Porphy. on Hor. A. P. 278.

<sup>3</sup> Vit. Aesch. p. 7 Dindf.

<sup>4</sup> Lucian, Nero c. 9, Necom. c. 16, Iupp. Trag. c. 41, de Salt. c. 27; Martial, viii. 3, 13, &c.

<sup>5</sup> The illustration is from Wieseler, Denkmäler, ix. 1. The original is a wall-painting from Pompeii or Herculaneum.

<sup>6</sup> Vit. Soph. p. 2 Dindf.

to walk with. The tragic actor had to be very careful to avoid stumbling upon the stage. Lucian says that accidents were not infrequent. Aeschines met with a misfortune of this kind as he was acting the part of Oenomaus at Collytus. In the scene where Oenomaus pursues Pelops he tripped up and fell, and had to be lifted up again by the chorus-trainer Sannio<sup>1</sup>. The use of the cothurnus, combined with the onkos, or prolongation of the crown of the mask, added greatly to the stature of the tragic actor. To prevent his seeming thin in comparison

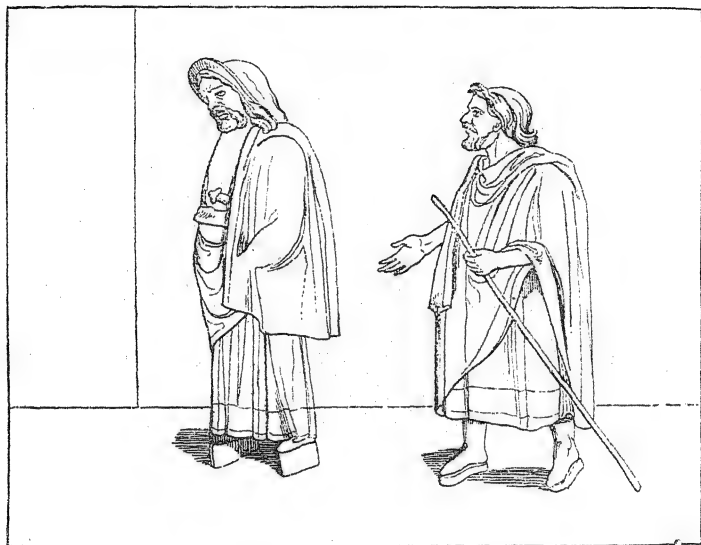


FIG. 19.

with his height, it was found necessary to increase his bulk by padding. His figure was thus made to appear of uniformly large proportions<sup>2</sup>.

The garments of the tragic actor were the same as the ordinary Greek dress, but their style and colour were more magnificent. They consisted of an under-garment or tunic, and an over-garment or mantle. The tunic was brilliantly variegated

<sup>1</sup> Lucian, *Somnium vel Gallus* 26; vit. Aeschin.

<sup>2</sup> Phot. v. *σωμάρτια*; Lucian, *de Salt.* 27.

in colour. Sometimes it was adorned with stripes, at other times with the figures of animals and flowers, or similar ornamentation. A special tunic of purple was worn by queens. The ordinary tragic tunic reached down to the feet. But the tunics worn by females upon the stage were sometimes longer than those worn by men, and trailed upon the ground, as the name 'syrtos' implies. On the other hand, it appears from various illustrations that shorter ones were occasionally provided for attendants and other minor characters. The tunic of the tragic actor was fastened with a broad girdle high up under the breast, and flowed down in long and graceful folds, giving an appearance of height and dignity. It was also supplied with long sleeves reaching to the waist. In ordinary life sleeves of this kind were considered effeminate by the European Greeks, and were mostly confined to the Greeks of Asia. The general character and appearance of the tragic tunic is well exemplified in the illustrations already given<sup>1</sup>.

The over-garments were the same in shape as those worn off the stage, and consisted of two varieties. The 'himation' was a long mantle passing round the right shoulder, and covering the greater part of the body. The chlamys was a short cloak flung across the left shoulder. As far as shape was concerned all the tragic mantles belonged to one or the other of these two classes, but they differed in colour and material. Pollux gives a list of several of them, but does not append any description<sup>2</sup>. The mere names prove that they were very gorgeous in colour. There were mantles of saffron, of frog-green, of gold, and of purple. Queens wore a white mantle with purple borders. These were the colours worn by tragic personages under ordinary circumstances. But if they were in misfortune or in exile, the fact was signified to the spectators from the very first by dressing them in the

<sup>1</sup> For the general account of the *χιτών* or tunic see Pollux iv. 115-118. The name *ποικίλον* shows that it was brilliantly coloured. As to the length of the tunic see Lucian, *Iupp. Trag.* c. 41, Eustath. *Il.* p. 954. 47, and the

works of art referred to on pp. 271, 272. For the ornamentation and the girdle see the same works of art. The sleeves were called *χειρίδες* (vit. Aesch. p. 6 Dindf.; Lucian, *Iupp. Trag.* c. 41).

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 116-118.

garb of mourning. In such cases the colours used were black, dun, grey, yellow, or dirty white.

Coverings for the head were not usually worn by the Greeks except when they were on a journey. The same practice was observed upon the stage. Thus in the *Oedipus Coloneus* Ismene arrives from Thebes wearing a 'Thessalian hat.' Ladies also wore a *mitra*, or band for binding the hair. In the scene in the *Bacchae*, where Pentheus is dressed up as a female, one of the articles mentioned is the hair-band<sup>1</sup>.

Such was the tragic costume as settled by Aeschylus, and universally adopted upon the Greek stage. No stress was laid upon historical accuracy; no attempt was made to discriminate one rank from another by marked variety in the dress. The same garb in its main features was worn by nearly all the characters of a Greek tragedy. In some instances special costumes were invented for particular classes of men. Sooth-sayers such as Teiresias always wore a woollen garment of network, which covered the whole of the body. Shepherds were provided with a short leathern tunic. Occasionally also heroes in great misfortune, such as Telephus and Philoctetes, were dressed in rags<sup>2</sup>. But the majority of the characters wore the regular tragic costume, with slight additions and variations; and the only means by which the spectators were enabled to identify the well-known personages of mythology, and to discriminate between the different ranks of the characters, was by the presence of small conventional emblems. For instance, the gods and goddesses always appeared with the particular weapon or article of dress with which their names were associated. Apollo carried his bow, and Hermes his magic wand. Athene wore the aegis<sup>3</sup>. In the same way the well-known heroes of antiquity had generally some speciality in their costume which enabled the spectators to recognize them as soon as they came upon the stage. Hercules was always conspicuous by means of his club and lion's skin;

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 116; Soph. O. C. 314; Rust. ii. 11.  
Eur. Bacch. 833.

<sup>3</sup> Aesch. Eum. 181, 404; Poll. iv.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 116, 117; Varro, Res 117.

Perseus wore the cap of darkness, as depicted in the illustration already given<sup>1</sup>. Kings in a similar manner were distinguished by the crown upon their head, and the sceptre in their hand. They also had a special article of dress, consisting of a short tunic with a swelling bosom, worn over the ordinary tunic<sup>2</sup>. Foreigners were discriminated by some one particular attribute, rather than by a complete variety in their costume. For example, Darius wore the Persian turban; otherwise he was probably dressed in the ordinary tragic style<sup>3</sup>. Warriors were equipped with complete armour, and occasionally had a short cloak of scarlet or purple wrapped round the hand and elbow for protection<sup>4</sup>. Old men usually carried a staff in their hands. The staff with a curved handle, which occurs not infrequently in ancient works of art, was said to be an invention of Sophocles<sup>5</sup>. Crowns of olive or laurel were worn by messengers who brought good tidings; crowns of myrtle were a sign of festivity<sup>6</sup>. The above examples illustrate the mode in which the different characters and classes were discriminated upon the Greek stage by small varieties in their equipment. But in its main features the dress of the majority of the characters was the same, and consisted of the elaborate Aeschylean costume.

Concerning the tragic dress as a whole a few observations may be made. The devotion to conventional rules is as conspicuous here as in Greek art generally. Persons in misfortune wear clothes of a particular colour. Soothsayers have garments of network. Gods and heroes are denoted by special symbols. The tragic costume, after having been once elaborated, is retained for centuries without any important innovation. As to the appearance which the tragic actor presented upon the stage, it is obvious that he must have been an impressive, though rather unnatural, figure. His large stature and bulky limbs, his harsh and strongly-marked features, his tunic with its long folds and

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 117. See fig. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Lucian, Somn. vel Gall. 26; Poll. iv. 116. The special tunic was called κόλπαμα.

<sup>3</sup> Aesch. Pers. 661.

<sup>4</sup> Poll. iv. 116, 117. The cloak was

called ἐφασπής.

<sup>5</sup> Eur. Ion 743; Vit. Soph. p. 2 Dindf.

<sup>6</sup> Aesch. Agam. 493; Soph. O. R. 83; Eur. Alc. 759.

brilliantly variegated pattern, his mantle with its gorgeous colours, must have combined to produce a spectacle of some magnificence. In criticising his appearance we must always remember that he was intended to be seen in theatres of vast dimensions, in which even the front rows of spectators were a considerable distance from the stage, while the more distant part of the audience could only discern general effects. For such theatres the tragic costume of the Greeks was admirably adapted, however unwieldy and unnatural it may have appeared on a closer inspection. Its magnificence and dignity were especially appropriate to the ideal figures which move in the dramas of Aeschylus and Sophocles. In the *Frogs* of Aristophanes Aeschylus is humorously made to declare that it was only right that the demigods of tragedy should wear finer clothes, and use longer words, than ordinary mortals. The tragedy of Euripides was altogether more human in tone, and a more ordinary costume would have been better suited to it. But the Greeks, with their strong feeling of conservatism in matters of art, clung to the form of dress already established. The result was not altogether satisfactory. The attempt to exhibit human nature pure and simple upon the Greek stage was bound to appear somewhat incongruous. It often happened that the speeches and actions of the heroes in Euripides were highly inconsistent with the superhuman grandeur of their personal appearance. In any case the step from the sublime to the ridiculous was a very short one in the case of the Greek tragic actor. The play had to be elevated in tone, and the performance of a high standard, to carry off the magnificence of the actor's appearance. Otherwise his unwieldy bulk and gloomy features excited laughter rather than tears. Lucian is especially fond of ridiculing the tragic actors of the time. He laughs at their 'chest-paddings and stomach-paddings,' 'their cavernous mouths that look as if they were going to swallow up the spectators,' and the 'huge boots on which they are mounted.' He wonders how they can walk across the stage in safety<sup>1</sup>. In Philostratus there is an amusing story of the extraordinary effect

<sup>1</sup> Lucian, *de Salt.* 27, *Anachar.* 23.



produced upon a country audience in Spain by the appearance



FIG. 20.



FIG. 21.

of a tragic actor before them for the first time. It is said that as soon as he came upon the stage they began to be rather alarmed

at his wide mouth, his long strides, his huge figure, and his unearthly dress. But when he lifted up his voice and commenced his speech in the loud and sonorous clang of the tragic stage, there was a general panic, and they all fled out of the theatre as if he had been a demon<sup>1</sup>. Such stories and criticisms bring clearly before us the unnatural character of the Greek tragic costume. It was well suited to an ideal drama and a theatre of enormous size. Under other conditions it was inevitable that it should appear ridiculous. In order to give an idea of the style and character of Greek tragic acting, two representations of tragic scenes (Figs. 20 and 21) are inserted, the first of which obviously represents Medea hesitating about the murder of her children<sup>2</sup>.

### § 5. *Costume of Satyric Actors.*

The costume of the actors in the satyric drama naturally comes next for consideration. Tragedy and the satyric drama were sister forms of art, descended from the same original. But while tragedy advanced in dignity and magnificence, the satyric drama retained all the wild licence and merriment which in early times had characterised the dithyrambic performances in honour of Dionysus. Its chorus invariably consisted of satyrs. As to the characters upon the stage, with which we are at present concerned, one of them was always Silenus, the drunken old follower of Dionysus; the rest were mainly heroes out of mythology, or other legendary beings. Thus in the Cyclops of Euripides, the only extant specimen of a satyric play, the characters upon the stage consist of Silenus on the one hand, and Odysseus and the Cyclops on the other. Concerning the costume of the actors the notices of Pollux are exceedingly brief. But it is possible to obtain fairly clear conceptions on the subject from several works of art, and more especially from the well-known vase-painting at Naples<sup>3</sup>. From this painting

<sup>1</sup> Philostrat. vit. Apoll. v. 9.

<sup>2</sup> The illustrations are taken from Monumenti Inediti, xi. 31, 32. The originals are wall-paintings at Pompeii.

<sup>3</sup> Baumeister, Denkmäler, nos. 422 (the Naples vase), 424, 1631; Wieseler, Denkmäler, vi. 1, 2 (the Naples vase), 3-10. See above, p. 271.

we see that the characters in a satyric drama, with the exception of Silenus, were dressed in much the same way as in tragedy. Their masks exhibit the same features, and their garments are of the same general description. The tunic appears to have been rather shorter, to facilitate ease of movement, as the acting in a satyric play was no doubt less dignified and statuesque than in tragedy. For the same reason the tall cothurnus of tragedy does not appear to have been worn. It is not depicted in the works of art; and although this fact in itself is perhaps hardly decisive, since even in representations of tragic scenes

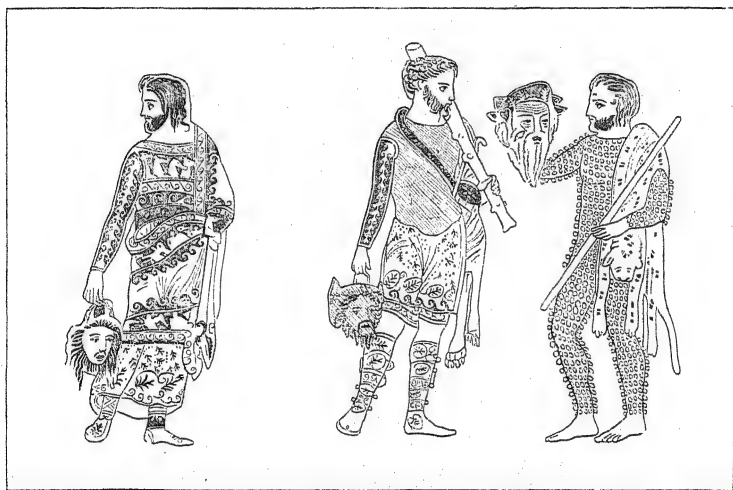


FIG. 22.

the cothurnus is occasionally left out, still on general grounds it appears to be most improbable that the cothurnus should have been worn in the satyric drama. But, on the whole, the heroic characters in satyric plays were dressed in much the same fashion as in tragedy. As to Silenus, his mask always represents a drunken old man, with a half-bestial expression. His under-garments, as depicted in works of art, are of two kinds. Sometimes he wears a tight-fitting dress, encasing the whole of his body with the exception of his head, hands, and feet. At other times he wears close-fitting trousers, and a tunic reaching

to the knees. All these garments are made of shaggy materials, to resemble the hide of animals<sup>1</sup>. Certain over-garments are also mentioned by Pollux as having been worn by Silenus, such as fawn-skins, goat-skins, imitation panther-skins, mantles of purple, and mantles inwoven with flowers or animals<sup>2</sup>. The figures in the illustration (Fig. 22), which is taken from the vase-painting already referred to, represent the three actors in a satyric drama. The first is playing the part of some unknown hero of mythology. His tunic is rather short, and he has no cothurnus; otherwise he exhibits the usual features of the tragic actor. The second figure represents Hercules. His tunic is still shorter, and barely reaches to the knees. The third figure is that of Silenus. His body is covered with a single close-fitting garment, and he carries a panther-skin over his shoulders. All these figures are holding their masks in their hands.

#### § 6. *Costume of Comic Actors.*

The inquiry into the costume of the actors in Athenian comedy falls into two divisions. There is the Old Comedy and the New. The Middle Comedy was merely a state of transition between the two, and presented no very distinctive characteristics of its own. The Old Comedy was essentially the product of a particular time and place. With its local allusions and personal satire it was unsuited for reproduction or imitation among later generations. Consequently very few traditions were preserved concerning the style of the masks and dresses used in it. The information to be found among later writers is extremely scanty. Owing to this deficiency of literary evidence we have to depend almost entirely on works of art for our knowledge of the subject. Fortunately, it is possible from this source to gather many interesting particulars

<sup>1</sup> Specimens of the first kind of dress are to be found in Wieseler, vi. 2 (=Baumeister, 422), 6, 7, 10; specimens of the second kind in vi. 8 (=Baum. 1631), 9. The tunic was called *χιτών χορταῖος*, *μαλλωτός*, *ἀμφίμαλλος*, and was apparently made of wool: cp. Poll. iv. 118; Hesych. and Suid. v.

*χορταῖος*; Dion. Hal. A. R. vii. 72; Ael. Var. Hist. iii. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 118. These articles are part of the dress of Silenus. The other actors were dressed quite differently. The dress of the chorus is described in the next chapter.

concerning the external features of the Old Comedy. We have already referred to the vase-paintings from Magna Graecia (Figs. 13 and 14), depicting comic scenes acted by the Phlyakes. These Phlyakes represented one branch of the old Doric comedy, and their performances evidently originated in the same phallic exhibitions out of which Attic comedy was developed. There are many points in common between the two. In both the phallus was regularly worn. In both a frequent source of ridicule was found in parodies of tragic dramas, or of legendary fables<sup>1</sup>. On these grounds it was long since suspected that the costume of the Phlyakes might resemble that of the old Attic comedy, and might be used to illustrate it. This opinion has



FIG. 23.

been confirmed by recent investigations<sup>2</sup>. There is an Attic vase (Fig. 23) of the early fourth century, which had been previously overlooked, but which throws much light upon the subject. It gives us a picture of three comic actors dressed in their stage costume, and holding their masks in their hands<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> There does not appear however to be any instance of an old Attic comedy being acted by the Phlyakes. The scene in Baumeister no. 904, where Hercules is knocking against a door, and a slave on a donkey follows behind, was formerly supposed to be the opening scene of the *Frogs*. But this is very doubtful. The character in the vase-painting is the real Hercules, and not Dionysus disguised as such.

<sup>2</sup> Körte, *Studien zur alten Komödie*, Jahrbuch des archaeol. Instituts, 1893, pp. 61-93.

<sup>3</sup> The illustration is taken from *Compte Rendu de la Commission Impériale Archéologique*, 1870-1871, plate iv. 1. The vase was found in the Crimea, but is now at St. Petersburg. In the original there are two other figures (not actors), one on each side of the group. These have been omitted from the copy.

There are also a number of terra cotta statuettes, of Attic workmanship, and belonging to the end of the fifth and the beginning of the fourth centuries, which apparently represent figures from the comic stage. Copies of two of these statuettes (Fig. 24) are here inserted<sup>1</sup>. The costume found on the vase and in the statuettes is much the same as that depicted in the Phlyakes paintings. It seems certain, therefore, that the dress of the Phlyakes was akin to that used in the old Athenian comedy; and it is now possible, from the sources just enumerated, to determine the general character of this latter costume.



FIG. 24.

The Old Comedy was the direct descendant of the boisterous phallic performances at the festivals of Dionysus. Coarseness and indecency were an essential part of it. The actors therefore regularly wore the phallus<sup>2</sup>. This fact, which is expressly stated by the grammarians, is confirmed by the evidence of the

<sup>1</sup> The two figures are from Körte, l. c. pp. 78 and 80. Both were found at Athens. For a complete list of

these statuettes see Körte, pp. 77-86.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Nub. 538.

paintings and statuettes. It is true that Aristophanes in the *Clouds* takes credit to himself for having discarded this piece of indecency, and for having introduced a more refined style of wit into his comedy. But whatever he may have done in the *Clouds*—and it is doubtful how far his words are to be taken in the literal sense—there are numerous passages to show that in most of his other plays he followed the ordinary custom<sup>1</sup>. Another constant feature in the old comic dress was the grotesque padding of the body in front and behind. The figures of the actors, women as well as men, were stuffed out into an extravagant and ludicrous shape. The padding, as we see from the works of art, was enclosed in a tight-fitting under-garment, which covered the whole of the actor's person except his head, hands, and feet<sup>2</sup>. This under-garment was made of some elastic knitted material, so as to fit close to the figure. In most cases it was dyed a flesh colour and represented the skin. But in some of the Phlyakes vases (e.g. Fig. 14) the arms and legs of the actors were ornamented with stripes, and a tight jersey was worn over the body, and painted in imitation of the naked figure. Apart from the under-garment the clothes worn by the actors were the tunic and mantle of ordinary life. References to various kinds of mantles and tunics are common in the plays of Aristophanes<sup>3</sup>. But it appears from the paintings and statuettes that in most cases these garments were cut shorter than those of real life, so as to display the phallus.

The masks of the Old Comedy fall into two classes, those

<sup>1</sup> Aristoph. *Nub.* 538 οὐδὲν ἦλθε βαφαμένη σκύντινον καθειμένον κ.τ.λ. Possibly Aristophanes only means that he used the *φαλλός ἀναδεδεμένος* instead of the more indecent *καθειμένος*. *Nub.* 734 seems to show that the *φαλλός* was used even in the *Clouds*. For its employment in the other plays cp. *Acham.* 156 foll., 1216 foll., *Vesp.* 1342, *Pax* 1349, *Lysist.* 928, 937, 987 foll., 1073 foll., *Thesm.* 59, 141, 239, 643, 1114.

<sup>2</sup> The padding was called *σωμάτιον*.

Cp. Phot. *σωμάτια, τὰ ἀναπλάσματα οἷς οἱ ὑποκριταὶ διασάττουσιν αὐτοὺς*. Luc. *Iupp. Trag.* 41 *προγαστρίδια καὶ σωμάτια*. The name of the under-garment is uncertain. Müller (*Bühnenalt.* p. 230) thinks it too was called *σωμάτιον*, on the strength of Poll. iv. 115 καὶ σκευὴ μὲν ἡ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν στολὴ (ἡ δ' αὐτὴ καὶ σωμάτιον ἐκαλεῖτο). But this is very doubtful.

<sup>3</sup> For the references see Müller, *Bühnenalt.* p. 249 foll.

for real characters, and those for fictitious ones. When real individuals were introduced upon the stage, such as Socrates and Euripides, the masks were portraits of the actual persons. Before a word was spoken the character was recognised by the audience. When Aristophanes brought out the Knights, the general terror inspired by Cleon was so great, that the mask-makers refused to make a portrait-mask of him, and an ordinary mask had to be worn. Socrates, during the performance of the *Clouds*, is said to have stood up in his place in the theatre, to enable the strangers present to identify him with the character upon the stage<sup>1</sup>. The fictitious masks, as we learn from the grammarians, were grotesque and extravagant in type<sup>2</sup>. They are represented as such in the works of art. The mouth is large and wide open, and the features twisted into a grimace. At the same time the masks in the Attic representations are less distorted and unnatural than those of the Phlyakes vases. The expression on the masks is mostly of a cheerful and festive kind; but sometimes crafty, thoughtful, or angry features are portrayed. Not infrequently in the Old Comedy figures of a fanciful and absurd character were introduced upon the stage. Thus Pseudartabas, the King's Eye, had a mask with one huge eye in the centre of it. The trochilus in the *Birds* created laughter by its immense beak. The epops was provided with a ridiculously long crest, but seems otherwise to have been dressed like a human figure. Iris in the *Birds* came on the stage with outspread wings, swelling tunic, and a head-covering of enormous size, so as to cause Peisthetaerus to ask her whether she was a ship or a hat. Prometheus with his umbrella, and Lamachus with his nodding crests, are further examples of grotesque costume<sup>3</sup>. The covering for the feet was not, as in the later comedy, of one conventional type, but varied according to the sex and position of the character. Several kinds of boot and shoe are referred to in Aristophanes<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 143; Platon. de Comoed. (Dindf. p. 21); Aristoph. Equit. 230; Ael. Var. Hist. ii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 143 ἐπὶ τὸ γελοιότερον ἐσχημάτιστο.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Acham. 97; Aristoph. Av. 62, 94, 104, 1203 (with Schol. ad loc.), 1508, Acham. 575 foll.

<sup>4</sup> Müller, Bühnenalt. p. 253.



As regards the origin of the actor's costume which we have been describing nothing is known from tradition. But Körte has a very plausible conjecture on the subject<sup>1</sup>. He points out that in the early Attic representations of Bacchic scenes there are no traces of figures resembling those of the old comic actors. The followers of Dionysus consist of Sileni and (later on) of satyrs. On the other hand, in the numerous Bacchic vases found at Corinth there are no satyrs and Sileni; their place is taken by a group of curious beings who resemble the old comic actors in these two respects—the phallus and the exaggerated bulk of the lower part of the body. These figures have no generic name; but their individual names are inserted on one of the vases, and show that they were not human beings, but creatures of the goblin type<sup>2</sup>. Similar figures are also found in vases from the Kabeirion at Thebes, but in this case they appear as burlesque actors taking part in Bacchic festivities<sup>3</sup>. Körte suggests that these goblin followers of Dionysus were the prototype of the actors in the Old Comedy; that it was in the neighbourhood of Corinth that they were first transformed into performers of farce and burlesque; and that this species of comedy, together with the ludicrous garb of the actors, then spread over various other parts of Greece, such as Athens, Thebes, and Magna Graecia. That the old Attic comedy was largely indebted to that of the northern Peloponnese is shown by various traditions; and the debt may very well have consisted in the introduction of these farcical comedians, and their combination with the old Attic choruses. If this theory is correct—and there is much to be said in its favour—it points to a curious antithesis between the early history of tragedy and comedy. The satyrs and the Corinthian goblins were both of them semi-human votaries of Dionysus, and both of them played an important part in the development of the drama. But while the satyrs

<sup>1</sup> Jahrbuch des archaeol. Inst. 1893, p. 89 foll.

<sup>2</sup> The vase with the names (Εὔνους, Ὀφέλανδρος, Ὀμβρικος) is given by Körte, p. 91. For another specimen

see Baumeister, no. 2099.

<sup>3</sup> Körte, Athen. Mittheil. 1884, p. 346 foll. See the specimen given by Cook in the Classical Review, 1895, p. 373.

became the chorus of tragedy, the goblins changed into the actors of the comic stage.

The New Comedy was of much longer duration than the Old Comedy, and was much more widely spread. It continued to flourish at Athens itself as late as the imperial epoch, and was transferred to Rome in the translations of Plautus and Terence and the other comic writers. There is no lack of information as to the costumes generally in use<sup>1</sup>. In the first place all the actors wore masks, just as in the other branches of the Greek drama. As far as abstract fitness goes, the masks might well have been dispensed with. As the New Comedy was essentially a comedy of manners and every-day life, and its chief excellence lay in the accurate delineation of ordinary human character, it is probable that a style of representation after the fashion of the modern stage would have been much more appropriate to it. In a theatre of moderate size, with actors untrammelled by the use of masks, all the finer shades in the character-painting might have been exhibited clearly to the spectators. But in ancient times such a thing was impossible. To the Greek mind the use of masks was inseparably associated with the stage; and the Greeks were in such matters extremely tenacious of ancient custom. It is also very questionable whether in their enormous theatres masks could possibly have been dispensed with. At any rate they were invariably retained in the New Comedy. But it is a strange thing that, although in all other respects the New Comedy was a faithful representation of ordinary life and manners, the masks employed should have been of the most ludicrous and grotesque character. The fact is expressly stated by Platonius, and is borne out by the evidence of numerous works of art<sup>2</sup>. There was a total disregard for realism and fidelity to nature. The exaggerated eyebrows

<sup>1</sup> For a list of the works of art illustrating the subject see Müller, *Bühnenalt.* pp. 258, 273-276.

<sup>2</sup> Platon. ap. Dindf. *Proll. de Com.* p. 21 *ἐν δὲ τῇ μέσῃ καὶ νέᾳ κωμῳδίᾳ ἐπίτηδες τὰ προσωπεῖα πρὸς τὸ γελοιότε-*

*ρον ἐδημιούργησαν . . . ὁρῶμεν γοῦν τὰ προσωπεῖα τῆς Μενάνδρου κωμῳδίας τὰς ὀφρῦς ὅποιας ἔχει, καὶ ὕψος ἐξεστραμμένον τὸ στόμα καὶ οὐδὲ κατ' ἀνθρώπων φύσιν.* See Wieseler, *Denkmäl.* v. 27-52; Baumeister, nos. 905-908.

and distorted mouths gave an utterly unnatural expression to the features. Such masks were perfectly in keeping with the tone of the Old Comedy, in which parody and caricature predominated. But it is strange that they should have been adopted in the New Comedy, which otherwise was praised for holding the mirror up to nature. The reason probably lay in the size of the theatres. The excellence and humour of a finely-drawn mask would have been lost upon an audience seated at a great distance from the stage. Of course the statement of Platonius has to be taken with some qualification. The masks were not invariably distorted. Some of the young men and women were depicted with handsome, though strongly-marked, features, as in tragedy. But the comic characters always wore masks of the grotesque kind just referred to. Copies of four comic masks (Figs. 25 and 26) are given on the next page<sup>1</sup>.

Pollux supplies a long list of the masks in ordinary use in the New Comedy, with accurate descriptions of each of them<sup>2</sup>. His list comprises masks for nine old men, eleven young men, seven slaves, three old women, and fourteen young women. In this list are included all the stock characters of the New Comedy, such as the harsh father, the benevolent old man, the prodigal son, the rustic youth, the heiress, the bully, the pimp, the procuress, and the courtesan. For all these characters there are regular masks with strongly characteristic features. In the plays of the New Comedy, as each personage stepped upon the stage, he must have been recognised at once by the audience as an old friend. Constant repetition must have rendered them familiar with the typical features of each sort of character. Certain kinds of complexion, and certain styles of hair and eyebrow, were appropriated to particular classes. White or grey hair was of course the regular sign of old age.

<sup>1</sup> Fig. 25 is taken from *Archaeol. Zeitung*, 1878, Taf. 4, and represents the masks of a girl and a slave. The original is a wall-painting at Pompeii. Fig. 26, which is taken from *Monumenti Inediti*, xi. 32, contains two copies of

terra cottas found at Pompeii. It will be seen that the mask of the girl is not unlike a tragic mask in general character.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 143-154. Cp. Quint. Inst. xi. 3. 74.



FIG. 25.



FIG. 26.

Red hair was the mark of a roguish slave. Thick curly hair denoted strength and vigour. Miserly old men wore their hair close-cropped, while soldiers were distinguished by great shaggy manes. The hair of the courtesans was bound up with golden ornaments, or brilliantly-coloured bands. Beards were distinctive of manhood or middle age, and were not used in the masks of youths or old men. The complexion was always a prominent feature in the mask. A dark sun-burnt complexion was the sign of rude health, and was given to soldiers, country youths, or young men who frequented the palaestra. A white complexion denoted effeminacy; pallor was the result of love or ill-health. Red cheeks, as well as red hair, were given to rogues. The eye-brows were strongly marked and highly characteristic. When drawn up they denoted pride or impudence, and were used in the masks of young men and of parasites. The hot-tempered old father, who alternated between fits of passion and fits of affection, had one eye-brow drawn up and the other in its natural position, and he used to turn that side of his face to the audience which was best in keeping with his temper at the moment. Noses were generally of the straight Greek type; but old men and parasites occasionally had hook noses, and the country youth was provided with a snub nose. Sometimes the ears showed signs of bruises, to denote that the person had frequented the boxing-school. The modern equivalent would be a broken nose, but among Greek boxers the ear was the part principally aimed at. The above abstract of the account in Pollux, together with the illustrations on the previous page, will give some idea of the different styles of mask employed in the later comedy.

The costume of the actors in the New Comedy was copied from that of ordinary life. The covering for the foot was the same for all the characters, and consisted of a light sort of shoe, which was merely drawn on, without being tied in any way<sup>1</sup>. Pollux gives a short account of the dresses used in the New Comedy, from which it appears that particular colours

<sup>1</sup> This shoe was called *ἐμβάς* in de diff. vocab. p. 49; Aristoph. Nub. Greek, and *soccus* in Latin: see Ammon. 858.

were appropriated to particular classes<sup>1</sup>. White was worn by old men and slaves, purple by young men, black or grey by parasites. Pimps had a bright-coloured tunic, and a variegated mantle. Old women were dressed in green or light blue, young women and priestesses in white. Procuresses wore a purple band round the head. The above statements are to a certain extent corroborated by the testimony of the works of art, but there are numerous exceptions. They cannot therefore be regarded as an exhaustive account of the subject. Other



FIG. 27.

details of dress and costume are mentioned by Pollux. Old men carried a staff with a bent handle. Rustics were dressed in a leather tunic, and bore a wallet and staff, and occasionally a hunting-net. Pimps had a straight staff, and carried an oil flask and a flesh-scraper. Heiresses were distinguished by fringes to their dress. Considered as a whole the costume of the New Comedy seems to have been even more conventional than that of tragedy. The colour of a person's dress,

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 119-120.

the features of his mask, and small details in his equipment, would tell the spectators at once what sort of a character he was intended to represent. A scene from a wall-painting (Fig. 27) is here inserted, as a specimen of the style and outward appearance of the New Comedy<sup>1</sup>.

### § 7. *Speech, Song, and Recitative.*

The profession of acting in ancient times required a great variety of accomplishments. The words of a play were partly spoken and partly sung, and it was necessary that the actor should have a knowledge of music, and a carefully cultivated voice. He had to combine the qualities of a modern actor with those of an operatic singer. In fact the Greek drama was not unlike a modern comic opera in this particular respect, that it consisted of a mixture of speaking and of singing. The question as to the mode in which the different portions of the dialogue were delivered, and the proportion which speech bore to song in the parts of the actors, is a matter of very great interest. In the first place there can be little doubt that, with few exceptions, all that portion of the dialogue which was written in the ordinary iambic trimeter was merely spoken or declaimed, with no musical accompaniment whatsoever. This of course constituted by far the larger part of the dialogue. Some remarks of Aristotle in the *Poetics* may be cited in proof of the above statement. Aristotle expressly says that in certain portions of the drama there was no music at all. In another place he remarks that when dialogue was introduced into tragedy, the iambic trimeter was naturally adopted as the most suitable metre, since it is 'better adapted for being spoken' than any other<sup>2</sup>. A second argument is to be found in the practice of the Roman stage. In two of the manuscripts of Plautus there are marks in the margin to discriminate between

<sup>1</sup> The illustration is from Monumenti Inediti, xi. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Aristot. *Poet.* c. 6 τὸ δὲ χωρὶς τοῖς εἶδεσι τὸ διὰ μέτρων ἓνα μόνον περαίνει-

σθαι καὶ πάλιν ἕτερα διὰ μέλους, c. 4 λέξεως δὲ γενομένης αὐτῇ ἡ φύσις τὸ οἰκεῖον μέτρον εὔρε, μάλιστα γὰρ λεκτικὸν τῶν μέτρων τὸ ἱαμβεῖον ἐστίν.

the portions of the play which were spoken, and the portions which were sung. The result is to show that, while the rest of the play was sung, the iambic trimeters were always spoken<sup>1</sup>. As Roman comedy was a close and faithful imitation of the Greek, it follows almost as a matter of certainty that the iambic trimeters were spoken in the Greek drama also. It is true that in one place Lucian contemptuously remarks about the tragic actor, that he 'occasionally even sings the iambic lines<sup>2</sup>.' But this statement, at the very most, cannot be held to prove more than that in Lucian's time iambic passages were sometimes sung or chanted. It is no proof that such a practice ever existed in the classical period. It is quite possible that in the second century A. D., when the chorus had either disappeared from tragedy, or been very much curtailed, some of the more emotional portions of the iambic dialogue were sung or chanted as a sort of equivalent. But Lucian himself speaks of the practice with disapproval, as a sign of bad taste and degeneracy. In the best period of the drama there can be little doubt that the ordinary iambics were spoken. The only exception was in cases where iambic lines occurred in close connexion with lyrical metres. For instance, iambics are sometimes inserted in the midst of a lyrical passage. At other times speeches in iambics alternate with speeches in a lyrical metre, and the pairs of speeches are bound up into one metrical system. In such cases the iambics were probably given in song or recitative. But the regular iambic dialogue, and in consequence the greater part of the play, was spoken without musical accompaniment.

The lyrical portions of a Greek play were almost always sung. In an actor's part the lyrical passages consisted either of solos, or of duets and trios between the characters on the stage, or of joint performances in which actors and chorus

<sup>1</sup> The mark C (canticum) denotes the part which was sung, DV (diverbium) the part which was spoken. These marks are found in cod. vetus (B), and cod. decurtatus (C), and the plays in which they occur are the *Trinummus*,

*Poenulus*, *Pseudolus*, *Truculentus*, and parts of others. See Christ, *Metrik*, p. 677 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Lucian, *de Salt.* 27 ἐνίοτε καὶ περιᾶδων τὰ ἰαμβεῖα.



took part alternately. These musical passages were in tragedy confined mainly to lamentations and outbursts of grief<sup>1</sup>. In general it may be said that, both in tragedy and comedy, song was substituted for speech in those scenes where the emotions were deeply roused, and found their fittest expression in music.

In addition to the declamation of the ordinary dialogue, and the singing of the lyrical passages, there was also a third mode of enunciation in use upon the Greek stage. It was called 'parakataloge,' and came half-way between speech on the one hand, and song on the other. Its name was due to the fact that it was allied in character to 'kataloge,' or ordinary declamation. It corresponded closely to what is called recitative in modern music, and consisted in delivering the words in a sort of chant, to the accompaniment of a musical instrument. On account of its intermediate character it was sometimes called 'speech,' and sometimes 'song.' It was first invented by Archilochus, and employed by him in the delivery of his iambics, which were partly sung, and partly given in recitative. A special kind of harp, called the klepsiambos, was originally employed for the purpose of the accompaniment. Recitative was subsequently introduced into the drama, as Plutarch expressly states<sup>2</sup>. It is not easy to determine, by means of the slight and hazy notices upon the subject, what were the particular portions of a play in which recitative was employed. But there are certain indications which seem to show that it was used in the delivery of iambic, trochaic, and anapaestic tetrameters, and of regular anapaestic dimeters. Thus it is distinctly recorded of the actor Nicostratus that he

<sup>1</sup> Songs by the actors were called τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς. The solos (in tragedy) were called μονωδία, the duets and trios had no special name. Musical duets between actors and chorus were in tragedy called κόμμοι. Suidas vv. μονωδεῖν, μονωδία; Aristot. Poet. c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Plut. Mus. p. 1140 F ἀλλὰ μὴ καὶ Ἀρχιλόχος τὴν τῶν τριμέτρων ῥυθμοποιῶν προσεφεύρε . . . καὶ τὴν παρακαταλογήν,

καὶ τὴν περὶ ταῦτα κρούσιν . . . ἔτι δὲ τῶν ἱαμβείων τὸ τὰ μὲν λέγεσθαι παρὰ τὴν κρούσιν, τὰ δ' εἶδ' ἄρχειλον φασὶ καταδείξαι, εἶθ' οὕτω χρῆσασθαι τοὺς τραγικοὺς ποιητάς. Athen. p. 636 B ἐν οἷς γὰρ (φησὶ) τοὺς ἱάμβους ᾄδον, ἱαμβίκας ἐκάλουν· ἐν οἷς δὲ παρελογίζοντο τὰ ἐν τοῖς μέτροις, κλεψιάμβους. Hesych. v. καταλογή· τὸ τὰ ἄσματα μὴ ὑπὸ μέλει λέγειν.

gave trochaic tetrameters in recitative to the accompaniment of the flute<sup>1</sup>. Then again, the two sets of trochaic tetrameters, which came at the end of the parabasis, cannot have been sung, as their very name implies. The probability therefore is that they were given in recitative<sup>2</sup>. Thirdly, there is a passage in the Peace where the metre changes abruptly from lyrics to trochaic tetrameters without any break in the sentence<sup>3</sup>. It is difficult to suppose that in such a case a transition was made suddenly from song to mere speech. But the transition from song to recitative would have been quite feasible. Fourthly, it is asserted that on those occasions when the speech of an actor was accompanied by dancing on the part of the chorus, the metres employed were mostly iambic and anapaestic tetrameters<sup>4</sup>. But as it is impossible, in the case of Greek performers, to imagine dancing without a musical accompaniment, the verses must have been given in recitative. Fifthly, in the parabasis to the Birds the nightingale is asked to lead off the anapaests with the flute; and the scholiast remarks that 'the parabasis was often spoken to the accompaniment of the flute<sup>5</sup>.' This statement means that the anapaestic tetrameters, which constitute the parabasis proper, were given in recitative. Lastly, there is the fact that the terms 'speech' and 'song' are both used of anapaests, implying that they occupied an intermediate position<sup>6</sup>. For these

<sup>1</sup> Xen. Symp. vi. 3 ὥσπερ Νικύστρατος ὁ ὑποκριτῆς τετράμετρα πρὸς τὸν αὐλὸν κατέλεγεν.

<sup>2</sup> The two groups of trochaic tetrameters in the parabasis were called ἐπίρρημα and ἀντεπίρρημα. See Platon. in Dindf. Prolegom. de Comœd. p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Aristoph. Pax 1171, 1172.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. Arist. Nub. 1355 οὕτως ἐλεγον πρὸς χορὸν λέγειν, ὅτε τοῦ ὑποκριτοῦ διατιθεμένου τὴν ῥῆσιν, ὁ χορὸς ὠρχεῖτο. διὸ καὶ ἐκλέγονται ὡς ἐπιτοπλείστον ἐν τοῖς τοιοῦτοις τὰ τετράμετρα, ἢ τὰ ἀναπαιστικά, ἢ τὰ ἱαμβικά, διὰ τὸ βραδύως ἐμπέπτεν ἐν τοῖσι τὸν τοιοῦτον ῥυθμόν.

<sup>5</sup> Aristoph. Av. 682-684 ἀλλ' ὦ καλλιβόαν κρέκουσ' | αὐλὸν φθέγματοςιν ἡρινοῖς, | ἄρχου τῶν ἀναπαίστων, and Schol.

ad loc. πολλάκις πρὸς αὐλὸν λέγουσι τὰς παραβάσεις.

<sup>6</sup> The exodos, mostly consisting of anapaests, is described as ἄπερ ἐπὶ τῇ ἐξόδῳ τοῦ δράματος ᾄδεται in Schol. Arist. Vesp. 270, and as ὁ ἐξίοντες ᾄδον in Poll. iv. 108. But in Dindf. Proll. de Com. p. 37 it is called τὸ ἐπὶ τέλει λεγόμενον τοῦ χοροῦ. As far as the anapaestic tetrameters are concerned, the word ᾄδοντας in Aristoph. Plut. 1209, and Hesych.'s definition of ἀνάπαιστα as τὰ ἐν ταῖς παραβάσεσι τῶν χορῶν ᾄσματα, show that they were not merely spoken: the expression λέγοντας ἔπη in Aristoph. Equit. 508 proves that they were not sung. See Christ, Metrik, p. 680 ff.

and other similar reasons it appears probable that recitative was employed in passages written in the metres already specified, that is to say, in iambic, trochaic, and anapaestic tetrameters, and in regular anapaestic dimeters. It seems too that on certain rare occasions it was used in lyrical passages<sup>1</sup>.

It may be interesting to collect together in this place such information as we possess concerning the musicians and musical instruments employed in the Greek drama. The instrument generally used for the accompaniment both of the singing and of the recitative was the flute<sup>2</sup>. The harp had formerly been employed very frequently. But it was found that the flute, being a wind instrument, harmonised better with the human voice<sup>3</sup>. However the harp was occasionally introduced. In the Frogs Aeschylus calls for the harp, when he is going to give a specimen of the lyrics of Euripides. Similarly, in the parody of the choruses of Aeschylus, the recurrence of the refrain 'phlattothrat' points to an accompaniment on the harp. A harpist is depicted on the Naples vase, side by side with the flute-player<sup>4</sup>. In the beginning of the Birds, when the chorus makes its entrance, the regular chorus of twenty-four birds is preceded by four others, the flamingo, cock, hoopoe, and gobbler. These were apparently musicians; and the instrument which they played must have been the harp; since later on, when the parabasis is going to begin, Procne has to be sent for specially to play the flute-accompaniment<sup>5</sup>. As regards the number of musicians and instruments, the ordinary provision for a tragedy or comedy was a single flute-player. In the Delphic inscriptions of the third century, which give the names of the performers in the various contests at the Soteria, we find that in every dramatic exhibition only one flute-player was provided. Works of art never depict more than one; and one is the number mentioned by the

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. Probl. xix. 6 διὰ τί ἡ παρακαταλογή ἐν ταῖς ῥαῖς τραγικῶν;

<sup>2</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Nub. 312, Vesp. 580; Aristoph. Eccles. 890-892.

<sup>3</sup> Sext. Empir. p. 751, 21; Aristot.

Probl. xix. 43.

<sup>4</sup> Aristoph. Ran. 1286, 1304. Baumeister, Denkmäler, no. 422.

<sup>5</sup> Aristoph. Av. 226 foll., 659 foll.

grammarians<sup>1</sup>. But extra music might be supplied in special cases. Harpists, as we have seen, were occasionally employed, and as many as four of them seem to have been used in the Birds. Probably in the same way, when a special effect was to be produced, the number of the flute-players might be augmented. As to the costume of the musicians very little is known. In works of art they never appear in masks. But in the Birds it is clear that the flute-player and the four harpists were disguised as birds, and wore masks of an appropriate kind. Possibly in the Old Comedy the musicians were often arrayed in the same fashion as the chorus. But in tragedy and satyric drama the evidence of the vase-paintings would seem to show that they had no masks, but were dressed either in ordinary costume or in the long and ornamental tunic of the actors<sup>2</sup>. Their position during the performance was naturally in the orchestra, close to the chorus. In the Birds Procne has to come down from the stage to the orchestra, in order to accompany the parabasis. We are told also that at the end of a drama the flute-player marched out at the head of the chorus<sup>3</sup>. Hence we may conclude that he entered in front of them at the beginning of a play; and this supposition is confirmed by the manner in which the four harpists make their entrance in the Birds. Very probably the usual place for the musicians was near the altar of Dionysus.

### § 8. *Importance of the Voice in Greek Acting.*

In ancient acting the possession of a fine musical voice was a matter of absolute necessity. Several considerations will make it evident that the voice of the actor, upon the Greek stage, must have been far more important than it is at present. In the first place a considerable portion of the words in every Greek play were either sung, or delivered in recitative. In the

<sup>1</sup> Lüders, *die dionysischen Künstler*, p. 187 foll. Schol. Aristoph. Vesp. 582 *ἔθος δὲ ἦν ἐν ταῖς ἐξόδοις τῆς τραγῳδίας χορῶν προσώπων προηγέσθαι ἀλητήν, ὥστε αὐλοῦντα προπέμπειν.*

<sup>2</sup> See Baumeister, *Denkmäler*, nos. 422, 424; *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, xi. plate 11 (reproduced in Fig. 28).

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Vesp. 582.

second place each actor had to play several parts in succession, and to appear sometimes as a man, and sometimes as a woman. It would be essential, therefore, to mark the difference between the various personages by a corresponding variety in the tone of voice employed; and for this purpose an organ of great flexibility and compass must have been required. In the third place the whole character of Greek acting was largely modified by the costume of the performers. A modern actor adds force and emphasis to his speeches by means of the variety of his facial expression. A single glance, a slight movement of the features, is often enough to produce a very great effect. But to the Greek actor this mode of impressing the spectators was denied, owing to the use of masks. His features bore the same settled expression throughout the play. Even his gestures, in the case of tragedy, must have been much more restricted than in modern times, owing to the nature of the dress which he had to wear. On account of these limitations he was compelled to rely mainly upon his voice for the purpose of expressing all the fleeting emotions of the character he represented. Great skill and variety in the modulation of his tones were needed to counterbalance the absence of facial movement. Lastly, the Greek actor required a voice of enormous power, in order to make himself heard. When it is remembered that the theatre of Dionysus was in the open air, and was capable of holding nearly twenty thousand spectators, it will easily be seen that, in spite of the excellence of the acoustic arrangements, the demands upon the actor's voice must have been excessively great.

For these various reasons the first and most essential requisite in a Greek actor was a powerful and expressive voice. As a matter of fact, whenever an actor is mentioned by an ancient author, he is referred to in language which at the present day would seem much more appropriate to a notice of an operatic singer. It is always the excellence of the voice which is emphasised, little regard being paid to other accomplishments. And it is not so much the quality as the strength of the voice which is commended. The highest merit, on the

Greek stage, was to have a voice that could fill the whole theatre. Numberless passages from ancient authors might be quoted in proof of this assertion, but a few specimens will suffice. Of Neoptolemus, the great tragic actor, it is said that 'his powerful voice' had raised him to the head of his profession<sup>1</sup>. Licymnius, the actor mentioned in one of the letters of Alciphron, won the prize for acting at a tragic contest on account of 'his clear and resonant utterance<sup>2</sup>.' Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, on a certain occasion, being covetous of distinction as a dramatic writer, despatched a company of actors to the Olympic festival, to give a performance of one of his tragedies. As he wished to ensure that the exhibition should be of the highest excellence, he was careful to choose 'actors with the best voices<sup>3</sup>.' In a similar manner the emperor Nero prided himself on his talents as an actor. He instituted a tragic contest at the Isthmian festival, in order to display his powers. At this contest the actor Epeirotes 'was in splendid voice, and as his tones were more magnificent than ever, he won the greatest applause<sup>4</sup>.' The above passages are in reference to particular actors. Remarks about acting in general are of the same type. Demosthenes is reported to have said that 'actors should be judged by their voices, politicians by their wisdom.' According to Zeno an actor was bound to have 'a powerful voice and great strength.' Aristotle defines the science of acting as being 'concerned with the voice, and the mode of adapting it to the expression of the different passions.' Lucian remarks that the actor is 'responsible for his voice only.' Plato would expel 'the actors with their beautiful voices' from his ideal state<sup>5</sup>. Finally there is the curious fact recorded by

<sup>1</sup> Diod. Sic. xvi. 92 Νεοπτόλεμος ὁ τραγῳδός, πρωτεύων τῇ μεγαλοφωνίᾳ καὶ τῇ δόξῃ.

<sup>2</sup> Alciph. iii. 48 τορῶ τινι καὶ γεωνοτέρῳ φωνήματι χρησάμενος.

<sup>3</sup> Diod. Sic. xv. 7 ἐξαπέστειλε τοὺς εὐφανοτάτους τῶν ὑποκριτῶν . . . οὗτοι δὲ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον διὰ τὴν εὐφωμίαν ἐξέπληττον τοὺς ἀκούοντας.

<sup>4</sup> Lucian, Nero 9 ὁ δ' Ἐπειρώτης ἄριστα

φωνῆς ἔχων, εὐδοκίμων δ' ἐπ' αὐτῇ καὶ θαυμαζόμενος λαμπροτέρα τοῦ εἰωθότος.

<sup>5</sup> Plut. X orat. p. 848 B τοὺς ὑποκριτὰς ἔφη δεῖν κρίνειν ἐκ τῆς φωνῆς. Diog. Laert. vii. 20 τὴν μὲν φωνὴν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν μεγάλῃν ἔχειν. Aristot. Rhet. iii. 1. Lucian, de Salt. 27 μόνος τῆς φωνῆς ὑπεύθυνος παρέχων ἑαυτόν. Plat. Legg. 817 C καλλίφωνοι ὑποκριταί.

Cicero, that in the performance of a Greek play, when the actors of the second and third parts 'had louder voices' than the protagonist, they used to moderate and restrain their tones, in order to leave him the pre-eminence<sup>1</sup>. These passages, and others of the same kind which might be quoted, read like notices about operatic singers and musical performances, and prove conclusively the supreme importance of the voice among the ancient Greek actors.

Such being the requirements of the Greek stage, it was necessary that the actors should receive a musical education as elaborate as that of a professional singer in modern times. Cicero informs us that the Greek tragic actors spent many years in the training of their voices, and used to test them, before each performance, by running over all their notes from the highest to the lowest<sup>2</sup>. They had to be careful and abstemious in their diet, as excess in eating and drinking was found to be inconsistent with the possession of a good voice<sup>3</sup>. The importance attached to this particular quality in the actor's art was not always beneficial in its results. Actors were sometimes inclined to violate good taste by intruding into their performances mere exhibitions of skill in the manipulation of the voice. They were ready to catch the applause of the populace by startling effects, such as imitations of the rushing of streams, the roaring of seas, and the cries of animals<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, it was a common fault among the ancient actors that, as a result of excessive training, their voices sounded artificial and unnatural. There was a special term to denote the forced tone of voice which was caused by too much exercise. Aristotle remarks that one of the principal excellencies of the tragic actor Theodorus was the thoroughly natural character of his delivery. Unlike other actors he seemed to speak with his own voice<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Cic. div. in Caecil. § 48 'quum possit aliquanto clarius dicere . . . multum summittere, ut ille princeps quam maxime excellat.'

<sup>2</sup> Cic. de Orat. i. § 251.

<sup>3</sup> Aristot. Probl. xi. 22; Athen. p. 343 E.

<sup>4</sup> Plut. Aud. Poet. 18 B.

<sup>5</sup> Aristot. Rhet. iii. 2 διὸ δεῖ λαμβάνειν ποιούντας, καὶ μὴ δοκεῖν λέγειν πεπλασμένως ἀλλὰ πεφικότως . . . οἷον ἢ Θεοδώρου φωνῇ πέπονθε πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἄλλων ὑποκριτῶν ἢ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ λέγοντος ἔοικεν εἶναι, αἱ δ' ἄλλότῃ.

§ 9. *Style of Greek Acting.*

Both in tragic and comic acting a loud and exceedingly distinct utterance must have been a matter of necessity. But in comedy the tone of voice adopted appears, as was only natural, to have been much less sonorous than that of the tragic actors, and to have approached far more closely to the style of ordinary conversation<sup>1</sup>. In tragedy on the other hand it was the conventional practice to declaim the verses with a loud and ringing intonation, and to fill the theatre with a deep volume of sound. Ancient authors often refer to the sonorous utterances of the tragic stage<sup>2</sup>. With bad actors the practice would easily degenerate into mere bombast. Pollux mentions a series of epithets such as 'booming' and 'bellowing,' which were applied to actors guilty of such exaggeration. Socrates and Simylus, the tragic actors with whom Aeschines went on tour in the country districts of Attica, derived their nickname of 'the Ranters' from a fault of this kind<sup>3</sup>.

Another point which was required from ancient actors was great distinctness in the articulation of the separate words, and a careful observance of the rhythm and metre of the verses. In this respect the Athenians were a most exacting audience. Cicero speaks of their 'refined and scrupulous ear,' their 'sound and uncorrupted taste<sup>4</sup>.' Ancient audiences in general had a much keener ear for the melody of verse than is to be found in a modern theatre. A slovenly recitation of poetry, and a failure to emphasise the metre, would not have been tolerated by them. Cicero remarks on the fact that, though the mass of the people knew nothing about the theory

<sup>1</sup> Lucian, Anachar. c. 23 αὐτοὶ δὲ (οἱ τραγωδοὶ) μεγάλα τε ἱκεκράγεσαν καὶ διέβαινον οὐκ οἷδ' ὅπως ἀσφαλῶς ἐν τοῖς ὑποδήμασι . . . οἱ δὲ κωμικοὶ βραχυτέροι μὲν ἐκείνων καὶ πεζοὶ καὶ ἀνθρωπινώτεροι καὶ ἥττον ἐβόων.

<sup>2</sup> Philostrat. vit. Apoll. v. 8 (p. 171 Kayser) ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐξάρas τὴν φωνὴν γεγα-

νὸν ἐφθέγγετο; Lucian, l. c. See also the passages quoted on p. 306.

<sup>3</sup> Pollux (iv. 114), speaking of tragic acting, says εἴποις δ' ἂν βαρύστονος ὑποκριτής, βομβῶν, περιβομβῶν, ληκυθίζων, λαρυγγίζων, φαρυγγίζων. Dem. de Cor. § 262.

<sup>4</sup> Cic. Orat. §§ 25, 27.



of versification, their instinctive feeling for rhythmical utterance was wonderfully keen. He says that if an actor should spoil the metre in the slightest degree, by making a mistake about a quantity, or by dropping or inserting a syllable, there would be a storm of disapproval from the audience<sup>1</sup>. No such sensitiveness is to be found in modern theatres. It is common enough at the present day to hear blank verse declaimed as if it were prose. But among the ancient Greeks the feeling for correctness of rhythm in poetical recitations was just as instinctive as is the feeling for correctness of tune among ordinary musical audiences at the present time. If an actor in a Greek theatre made a slip in the metre of his verses, it was regarded in much the same way as a note out of tune would be regarded in a modern concert-room. As a consequence the mode of declamation practised on the ancient stage must have been much more rhythmical than anything we are now accustomed to, and the pauses and movements of the metre must have been much more clearly emphasised.

The use of appropriate gesture, in the case of Greek acting, was especially important, since facial expression was prevented by the mask, and the actor had to depend solely on the tones of his voice, and the effectiveness of his movements. In comedy, as might be expected, the gesticulation was of a free and unconstrained character, and is exemplified in numerous works of art. In tragedy on the other hand a more dignified style was adopted. The nature of the tragic actor's dress was sufficient in itself to make a realistic type of acting impossible. Of course it is easy to exaggerate the cumbersomeness of the ancient costume. It would be a mistake to suppose that it hampered the actor's limbs to such an extent as to prevent him moving about like an ordinary human being. Many passages in the ancient dramas prove that this was not the case. Actors could walk rapidly off the stage, or fly for refuge to an altar, or kneel down in supplication, without any difficulty<sup>2</sup>. They could even fall flat on the ground.

<sup>1</sup> Cic. de Orat. iii. §§ 195, 196, Parad. § 26.

<sup>2</sup> Antig. 76, Hel. 543, Androm. 529, Orest. 382, Hec. 339, &c.

Philoctetes sinks to the earth in a fainting-fit, overcome by the pain of his wound. Iolaus is knocked down by the Argive herald, while trying to protect the children of Hercules. Ajax throws himself on his sword, and Evadne flings herself from a rock on to the funeral pyre beneath. Hecuba, at the beginning of the Troades, lies stretched upon the earth in an agony of grief; and later on, when she hears the doom of Cassandra, she again falls prostrate<sup>1</sup>. But although, as we see from these examples, the tragic actor was not debarred from the ordinary use of his limbs, still the character of his dress must have made violent and impetuous movements a matter of great difficulty. Even if they had been easy, they would have been inconsistent with the tone of the tragic stage. The world of Greek tragedy was an ideal world of heroes and demigods, whose nature was grander and nobler than that of human beings. The realistic portrayal of ordinary human passions was foreign to the purpose of Greek tragedy. Scenes of physical violence or of abject prostration, such as those which have just been mentioned, are of rare occurrence. To be in harmony with this elevation of tone it was necessary that the acting should be dignified and self-restrained. Violent movements were usually avoided. A certain statuesque simplicity and gracefulness of pose accompanied the gestures of the tragic actor. On the long and narrow stage the figures were arranged in picturesque and striking groups, and the successive scenes in the play presented to the eye of the spectator a series of artistic tableaux. The representations of tragic scenes and personages in ancient works of art are characterised by a dignity and a repose which call to mind the creations of the sculptor. This sober and restrained style of acting was developed under the influence of Aeschylus and Sophocles during the great period of Attic tragedy. In later times a tendency towards realism and exaggeration in the gestures and the movements began to show itself. The actors of the

<sup>1</sup> Phil. 819, Heraclid. 75, Ajax 865, Eur. Suppl. 1070, Troad. 36, 462. Polymestor (Hec. 1058) and the Delphic priestess (Eum. 34) speak of

themselves as crawling out on all fours. But it is unnecessary to suppose that they actually made their entrance from the back-scene in this way.

fourth century were censured by many critics for having degraded the art of acting from its former high level, and for having introduced a style which was unworthy of the dignity of the tragic stage. Callippides was called an ape by the old actor Mynniscus because of the exaggerated vehemence of his manner<sup>1</sup>. But as the tragic costume, with its burdensome accompaniments, was retained with little alteration, it must have prevented any great advance in the direction of realism and violent gesticulation. The statuesque style of acting continued on the whole to be characteristic of the tragic stage, and was indeed the only proper style for Greek tragedy.

### § 10. *The Actors' Guild.*

In the course of the fourth century the members of the theatrical profession at Athens, together with the performers in the various lyric and musical contests, formed themselves into a guild, for the purpose of protecting their interests and increasing their importance. The members of the guild were called The Artists of Dionysus. Poets, actors, and chorus-singers, trainers, and musicians all belonged to the guild. When it first came into existence is not known for certain. Sophocles is said to have formed a sort of literary club, which may have been the prototype of the guild; but it is possible that there was no connexion between the two. At any rate it was fully established in the time of Aristotle, by whom it is mentioned<sup>2</sup>.

The guild was of great value in maintaining and enforcing the various privileges of the members. These were very considerable. Musical and dramatic contests among the Greeks were confined almost entirely to the great religious festivals, and regarded as celebrations in honour of the gods. The

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. Poet. c. 26 ἡ μὲν οὖν τραγωδία τοιαύτη ἐστίν, ὥς καὶ οἱ πρότερον τοὺς ὑστέρους αὐτῶν ᾤοντο ὑποκριτάς, ὡς λίαν γὰρ ὑπερβάλλοντα πίθηκον ὁ Μυννίσκος τὸν Καλλιπίδην ἐκάλει, τοιαύτη δὲ δόξα καὶ περὶ Πινδάρου ἦν . . . εἶτα οὐδὲ κίνησις ἅπασα ἀποδοκιμαστέα, εἴπερ

μηδ' ὄρχησις, ἀλλ' ἡ φαύλων, ὅπερ καὶ Καλλιπίδην ἐπεριμάτο καὶ νῦν ἄλλοις ὡς οὐκ ἐλευθέρας γυναικας μιμουμένων.

<sup>2</sup> Vit. Soph. ταῖς δὲ Μούσαις θιάσων ἐκ τῶν πεπαιδευμένων συναγαγεῖν. Aristot. Probl. xxx. 10 οἱ Διονυσιακοὶ τεχνῖται.

professionals who took part in them were ministers engaged in the service of the gods, and their presence was necessary for the due performance of the various observances. To enable them to fulfil their engagements, many of the ordinary laws and regulations were relaxed. In the first place actors and musicians were permitted to travel through foreign and hostile states for the purpose of attending the festivals. Even in time of war their persons and property were ensured from violation. Owing to this custom the actors Aristodemus and Neoptolemus were able to travel frequently to and fro between Athens and Macedonia during the height of the war, and to assist materially in the negotiation of the peace<sup>1</sup>. In the second place actors and musicians claimed to be exempt from naval and military service, in order to pursue their professional avocations in Athens and elsewhere. In the time of Demosthenes this immunity from service was occasionally granted, but had not yet hardened into an invariable custom. Demosthenes mentions the cases of two musicians who were severely punished for avoiding military service. One of them was Sannio the chorus-trainer, and the other was Aristides the chorus-singer. Meidias also is said to have used the most strenuous exertions to prevent the chorus of Demosthenes from being exempted from service<sup>2</sup>. At this time therefore it seems that such immunity was sometimes granted and sometimes not. Later on the Guild of Artists of Dionysus succeeded in getting the Amphictyonic Council to pass a decree, by which the Athenians were bound as a religious obligation to grant exemption from military service to all members of the dramatic and musical profession. In the same decree the duty of allowing them a safe passage through their territories was enforced upon the Greek nation generally. This decree was renewed towards the beginning of the third century at the request of the Guild. A copy of the decree was engraved on stone and erected in the theatre at Athens, and has fortunately been preserved<sup>3</sup>. A translation of the more important passages will be of interest,

<sup>1</sup> Dem. Fals. Leg. § 315.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. Meid. §§ 15, 58-60.

<sup>3</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 551.

as throwing light upon the position of the theatrical profession at Athens. It ran as follows: 'It was resolved by the Amphictyonic Council that security of person and property, and exemption from arrest during peace and war, be ensured to the artists of Dionysus at Athens; . . . that they enjoy that exemption from military service and that personal security which have previously been granted to them by the whole Greek nation; that the artists of Dionysus be exempt from naval and military service, in order that they may hold the appointed celebrations in honour of the gods at the proper seasons, and be released from other business, and consecrated to the service of the gods; that it be unlawful to arrest or seize an artist of Dionysus in time of war or peace, unless for debt due to a city or a private person; that, if an artist be arrested in violation of these conditions, the person who arrests him, and the city in which the violation of the law occurs, be brought to account before the Amphictyonic Council; that the immunity from service and personal security which are granted by the Amphictyonic Council to the artists of Dionysus at Athens be perpetual; that the secretaries cause a copy of this decree to be engraved on a stone pillar and erected in the temple, and another sealed copy of the same to be sent to Athens, in order to show the Athenians that the Amphictyonic Council is deeply concerned in the observance of religious duties at Athens, and is ready to accede to the requests of the artists of Dionysus, and to ratify their present privileges, and confer such other benefits upon them as may be possible.' In this decree it is very noticeable that dramatic and musical performances are treated throughout as divine observances in honour of the gods, and the actors and other professionals are described as ministers consecrated to the service of religion. The maintenance of their privileges is therefore a sacred obligation in which the Amphictyonic Council is deeply interested.

Another inscription has been preserved referring to the Athenian Guild of Artists of Dionysus<sup>1</sup>. It appears that the

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 552.

Guild had a sacred enclosure and altar at Eleusis, where they were accustomed to offer libations to Demeter and Kore at the time of the Eleusinian mysteries. During the disturbances of the Sullan campaigns the altar was dismantled, and the yearly celebrations discontinued. The inscription is a decree of the Guild thanking a certain Philemon for his exertions in restoring the altar and renewing the annual ceremonies.

From the time of the fourth century onwards guilds of actors similar to that at Athens were rapidly formed in various places throughout the Greek-speaking world. In this way the master-pieces of Greek tragedy were made familiar to the most remote districts to which Greek civilisation had penetrated. But it is beyond the scope of the present work to trace the progress of the Greek drama outside the limits of Athens and Attica<sup>1</sup>.

### § II. *Social Position of Actors.*

In Greece the profession of the actor was an honourable one, and there was no suspicion of degradation about it, as there was in Rome<sup>2</sup>. Actors and other dramatic performers were regarded as ministers of religion. In the dramatic exhibitions at Athens the actors were placed on the same level as the poets and choregi. Their names were recorded in the public archives, and in commemorative tablets; and competitions in acting were established side by side with the competitions between the poets. It is true that Aeschines is very frequently taunted by Demosthenes with his theatrical career, but the taunts are due to the fact, not that he was an actor, but that he was an unsuccessful one. Actors at the head of their profession occupied a very distinguished position. Aristodemus, the tragic actor, was on two occasions sent as ambassador to

<sup>1</sup> For a complete account of these guilds see Lüders, *Die dionysischen Künstler*; Foucart, *Des Associations religieuses chez les Grecs*.

<sup>2</sup> Corn. Nep. praef. 5 'in scaenam vero prodire et populo esse spectaculo

nemini in iisdem gentibus fuit turpitudini.' Livy xxiv. 24 (of Ariston the tragic actor) 'huic genus et fortuna honesta erant; nec ars, quia nihil tale apud Graecos pudori est, ea deformabat.'

Macedon by the Athenians, and was largely instrumental in negotiating the peace<sup>1</sup>. The great Athenian actors were much sought after by the monarchs of the time. Aristodemus and Neoptolemus were frequently at the court of Philip, and Thessalus and Athenodorus at the court of Alexander<sup>2</sup>. Thessalus was a great favourite with Alexander, and was employed by him on delicate missions<sup>3</sup>. The leading actors seem to have made large incomes. For instance, Polus told Demosthenes that he was paid a talent for acting during two days only<sup>4</sup>. It is not stated whether the performance to which he refers took place at Athens, or elsewhere; but in all probability it was in some foreign state. There is no evidence to show what salaries were paid to the actors at the great Athenian festivals.

As for the lower ranks of the profession, the tritagonists, chorus-singers, musicians, and so on, though there was nothing dishonourable about their calling, their reputation does not seem to have been very high. Their strolling and uncertain manner of life seems to have had a bad effect upon their character. Aristotle, in his Problems, asks the question why it is that the artists of Dionysus are generally men of bad character. He thinks the reason is partly due to the vicissitudes in their fortunes, and the rapid alternations between luxury and poverty, partly to the fact that their professional duties left them no time for general culture<sup>5</sup>. His remarks of course apply mainly to the lower grades of the profession.

### § 12. *Celebrated Athenian Actors.*

Before concluding this account of Greek acting some notice of the principal Greek actors may not be out of place. Unfortunately in most cases little more is known about them than their names. Several tragic actors of the fifth century are

<sup>1</sup> Aesch. Fals. Leg. §§ 15-19; Dem. de Cor. § 21.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. Fals. Leg. § 315, de Pace § 6; Diod. Sic. xvi. 92; Plut. Alex. 681 D.

<sup>3</sup> Plut. Alex. 669 D.

<sup>4</sup> Plut. X orat. p. 848 B. Gellius, N. A. xi. 9, gives the same story about Aristodemus.

<sup>5</sup> Aristot. Prob. xxx. 10.

referred to by ancient writers, such as Cleander and Mynniscus, the actors of Aeschylus, and Cleidemides and Tlepolemus, the actors of Sophocles<sup>1</sup>. But no details are recorded as to their individual characteristics and different styles. One interesting fact is known about Mynniscus, to the effect that he considered the acting of his successors as deficient in dignity and over-realistic. He was especially severe upon Callippides, the representative of the younger generation of actors<sup>2</sup>. This Callippides was notorious for his conceit. On one occasion, when he was giving himself airs in the presence of Agesilaus the Spartan, he was considerably disconcerted by being asked by the latter whether he was 'Callippides the pantaloons<sup>3</sup>.' Another tragic actor of the same period was Nicostratus, who was especially excellent in his delivery of the long narrative speeches of the messengers. His style was so perfect that to 'do a thing like Nicostratus' came to be a proverbial expression for doing it rightly<sup>4</sup>.

But it was in the age of Demosthenes that the most celebrated group of tragic actors flourished. Among them was Polus of Aegina, who was considered to be the greatest actor of his time, and whose name is very frequently referred to by later writers. He was one of the actors who had the credit of having taught elocution to Demosthenes<sup>5</sup>. At the age of seventy, and shortly before his death, he performed the feat of acting eight tragedies in four days<sup>6</sup>. A well-known story is told about him to the following effect. Soon after the death of a favourite son, he happened to be acting the part of Electra in the play of Sophocles. In the scene in which Electra takes in her hands the urn supposed to contain the ashes of Orestes, and pours forth a lamentation over his death, Polus came upon the stage with the urn containing the ashes of his own son, and holding it in his hands proceeded to act the scene with such profound depth of feeling as to

<sup>1</sup> Vit. Aesch.; Schol. Aristoph. Ran. 803, Nub. 1267.

<sup>2</sup> Aristot. Poet. c. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Xen. Symp. iii. 11; Plut. Ages. p. 607 D ἀλλὰ οὐ σύγε ἐσσι Καλλιπίδας

ὁ δεικνύσας;

<sup>4</sup> Macar. Cent. iii. 46; Prov. Coisl. 124.

<sup>5</sup> Rhet. Graec. vi. p. 35 (Walz).

<sup>6</sup> Plut. an. sen. 785 C.



produce the greatest impression upon the audience. As Gellius remarks, the acting in this case was no fiction, but a reality<sup>1</sup>. Another of the great actors of this time was Theodorus, about whom a few facts are recorded. The exceedingly natural tone of his delivery, and his habit of never permitting any of the subordinate actors to appear upon the stage before himself, have already been referred to. He considered that tragedy was much more difficult to act in than comedy, and once told the comic actor Satyrus that it was easy enough to make an audience laugh, but to make them weep was the difficulty<sup>2</sup>. His own powers in this respect were very great. Once when acting in Thessaly he produced such an effect upon the brutal tyrant Alexander of Pherae that Alexander was compelled to leave the theatre, because, as he afterwards told Theodorus, he was ashamed to be seen weeping over the sufferings of an actor, while he was perfectly callous about those of his countrymen<sup>3</sup>. The tomb of Theodorus, close to the banks of the Cephissus, was still to be seen in the time of Pausanias<sup>4</sup>.

The other leading tragic actors of this period were Aristodemus, Neoptolemus, Thessalus, and Athenodorus. The two former were frequently at the court of Philip, and took a large part in bringing about the peace of Philocrates. They are therefore denounced by Demosthenes as traitors to their country, and advocates of Philip's interests<sup>5</sup>. Neoptolemus was the actor who, at the banquet held in Philip's palace on the day before his assassination, recited a passage out of a tragedy bearing upon the uncertainty of human fortune, and the inexorable power of death. The fact was afterwards remembered as an ominous coincidence<sup>6</sup>. Thessalus and Athenodorus were often rivals. At Tyre, after the return of Alexander from Egypt, they were the principal competitors in the great tragic contest, in which the kings of Cyprus were the choregi, and the chief generals of the army acted

<sup>1</sup> Gell. N. A. vii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Plut. de se laud. 545 F.

<sup>3</sup> Ael. Var. Hist. xiv. 40.

<sup>4</sup> Pausan. i. 37. 3.

<sup>5</sup> See above, p. 315.

<sup>6</sup> Diod. Sic. xvi. 92.

as judges. On this occasion Athenodorus won, to the great grief of Alexander, who said he would have given a part of his kingdom to have ensured the victory of Thessalus<sup>1</sup>. The same two actors were also competitors at the City Dionysia in the year 341, but both of them were then beaten by Neoptolemus<sup>2</sup>.

Among the Greeks the distinction between the tragic and the comic actors was as complete as that between the tragic and comic poets<sup>3</sup>. There are no instances during the classical period of an actor attempting both branches of the profession. Still less is recorded about the great comic actors than about the actors of tragedy. A few names are mentioned, but there is almost a total absence of details concerning their style and mannerisms. We are told that one of Hermon's jests was to knock the heads of his fellow-actors with a stick, and that Parmenon was celebrated for his skill in imitating the grunting of a hog<sup>4</sup>. Interesting criticisms on the acting and the actors in comedy are unfortunately nowhere to be found.

<sup>1</sup> Plut. Alex. 681 D.

κριται κωμωδοῖς τε καὶ τραγωδοῖς οἱ αὐτοί.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 973.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Nub. 542; Plut.

<sup>4</sup> Plat. Rep. 395 B ἀλλ' οὐδέ τοι ὑπο-

Aud. Poet. 18 B.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CHORUS

#### § 1. *History of the Chorus.*

THE history of the chorus in the Greek drama is a history of gradual decay. In the earliest period, when both tragedy and comedy were mainly lyrical, the members of the chorus were the sole performers. After the introduction of actors and dialogue the chorus still continued for a time to play the leading part. But from the beginning of the fifth century it began slowly to dwindle in importance, until at length it either disappeared altogether, or sank to the position of the band in a modern theatre. As far as tragedy is concerned the process of decline can be traced with clearness in the existing dramas. It takes various forms. In the first place there is a gradual diminution in the length of the part assigned to the chorus. In the *Suppliques*, the oldest of existing Greek tragedies, the choral part forms no less than three-fifths of the whole composition. In the other plays of Aeschylus, with the exception of the *Prometheus*, it amounts on the average to about a half. In the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides the size is very much reduced. The choral part in Sophocles varies from about a quarter of the whole in the *Ajax* and the *Antigone* to about a seventh in the *Electra* and the *Philoctetes*. In Euripides it varies from about a quarter in such plays as the *Bacchae* and *Alcestis* to about a ninth in the *Orestes*. It appears therefore that in the fifth century the

part of the chorus was gradually but continuously diminished in size. Then again there is a constant tendency throughout the century to reduce the importance of the chorus by severing its connexion with the plot. In the lyrical tragedies of the earliest period the chorus was no doubt on most occasions the principal object of interest, and took the leading part in the play. This is still the case in some of the extant tragedies of Aeschylus. In the *Supplices*, for instance, the whole subject of the plot is the destiny of the fugitive maidens who form the chorus. It is their adventures which excite the sympathy of the audience; the other characters are of very little significance. In the *Eumenides* the interest centres chiefly round the conduct and feelings of the Furies. Even in the *Septem* and the *Persae*, though the chorus play a less prominent part, their connexion with the plot is still a very close one. Their destiny is involved in that of the principal characters. But in the other plays of Aeschylus the chorus begins to take much the same position as it occupies in Sophocles, and in the earlier plays of Euripides. It was at this period that Attic tragedy reached its highest perfection, and the question as to the proper place of the chorus in the plot was solved in the manner most consistent with the genius of Greek drama. The chorus is now thrown much further into the background, and appears in most plays, not as a participant in the action, but merely as a sympathetic witness. While the dialogue is proceeding, it follows the course of events with the keenest interest, but seldom actively interferes. In the pauses between the action it moralises on the significance of the incidents which have just occurred. Such is its position during the middle of the century. It has been removed from the stress and turmoil of the action into a calmer and more remote region, though it still preserves its interest in the events upon the stage. But in the later plays of Euripides a further development is noticeable. The chorus begins to lose even its interest in the action. In the pauses between the dialogue it sings odes of a mythological character, which have only the remotest connexion with the incidents

of the plot. In the course of the dialogue itself it converses less frequently with the actors than it had done hitherto. There is also a tendency to transfer much of the music from the orchestra to the stage. The old duets between actors and chorus are reduced both in size and number, and their place is taken by solos and duets sung exclusively upon the stage. This tendency to exclude the chorus from the play was carried still further by Agathon, who gave up all pretence of connexion between the plot and the songs of the chorus, and converted his odes into professed interludes. In the time of Aristotle this practice had become universal. The choral odes were now regarded in much the same light as the pieces of music performed between the acts in a modern theatre<sup>1</sup>. Whether the chorus still took any part in the dialogue is not stated. But we can hardly doubt that the tendency already strongly marked in Euripides had been developed to its natural results, and that the tragic chorus of the later fourth century was practically excluded from all share in the conduct of the play. After the fourth century very little is known about its history. But the evidence seems to show that it was sometimes discarded even as early as the third century; and in later times this came to be more and more the ordinary custom. Even when retained, its functions were merely those of the modern band<sup>2</sup>.

The history of the comic chorus is very similar. If we look at the extant plays of Aristophanes, we find that in the first nine, which were all produced in the fifth century, the chorus is an important and conspicuous element. But in the tenth, the *Ecclesiazusæ*, which was brought out in 392, there is a great change. The parabasis has disappeared, and the functions of the chorus are mainly confined to the singing of three or four odes, of no great length. In the *Plutus*, produced in 388, the decline of the chorus is still more marked. It has only about forty lines assigned to it in the course of the dialogue; and in the pauses between the dialogue it sang

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. *Poet.* c. 18.

<sup>2</sup> For details see the *Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, p. 452 foll.

interludes unconnected with the plot<sup>1</sup>. During the rest of the century the comic chorus seems to have still lingered on in a position similar to that which it holds in the *Plutus*. The grammarians who say that it was abolished entirely by the Middle Comedy apparently exaggerate the state of affairs<sup>2</sup>. There was still a comic chorus in the time of Aristotle<sup>3</sup>. Even in the New Comedy the earlier poets, such as Menander and Philemon, appear to have retained it in some of their plays, though merely for the purpose of providing interludes<sup>4</sup>. After the fourth century there are few traces of its presence. It is true that it was regularly used in the comedies at the Delphic Soteria during the third century<sup>5</sup>. It is found also in one comedy of Plautus, the *Rudens*. But in Terence there are no signs of it. This fact, combined with the statement of the grammarians that the New Comedy had no chorus, makes it certain that after the third century it had practically disappeared<sup>6</sup>.

## § 2. *Size of the Chorus.*

The tragic chorus, being a direct descendant of the old dithyrambic choruses, originally consisted of fifty members<sup>7</sup>. After

<sup>1</sup> Vit. Aristoph. p. 36 Dindf. The places for the interludes are marked χοροῦ in the text (ll. 321, 626, 801, 958).

<sup>2</sup> Platon. de Comoed. p. 21 Dindf. οἱ δὲ τῆς μέσης κωμῳδίας ποιηταὶ . . . τὰ χορικά μέλη παρέλιπον. Platon. p. 20 says the Aeolosicon of Aristophanes had no chorus; but frag. 8 seems to show that it had. Similarly the statement of Anon. de Comoed. p. 27 Dindf., that the *Plutus* χορῶν ἐστέρηται, is not entirely true.

<sup>3</sup> Aristot. Pol. iii. 3 ὥσπερ γε καὶ χορὸν ὅτε μὲν κωμικὸν ὅτε δὲ τραγικὸν ἕτερον εἶναι φαμεν, τῶν αὐτῶν πολλὰκις ἀνθρώπων ὄντων. Eth. Nic. iv. 6 κωμικοῖς χορηγῶν ἐν τῇ παρῶν πορφύραν εἰσφέρων. Athen. Pol. c. 56, where the appointment of χορηγοὶ κωμικοῖς is described. This probably implies a chorus; though not necessarily, as a choregus

would be required to meet the other expenses of a play. The substitution of an agonothetes for the choregi at the end of the fourth century may have been connected with the decline of the chorus. See above, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Vit. Aristoph. p. 36 Dindf. τὸν Πλοῦτον γράψας, εἰς τὸ διαναπαύεσθαι τὰ σικνηκὰ πρόσωπα καὶ μετεσκευάσθαι, ἐπιγράφει χοροῦ, φθειγγόμενος ἐν ἐκείνους ἃ καὶ ὀρώμεν τοῖς νέους (i.e. Menander and Philemon, cp. p. 35) ἐπιγράφοντας ζήλω Ἀριστοφάνους.

<sup>5</sup> Lüders, Die dionysischen Künstler, p. 187 foll.

<sup>6</sup> Anon. de Comoed. p. 27 Dindf.

<sup>7</sup> Poll. iv. 110. Pollux further states that the number continued to be fifty until the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus was produced; and that the people were so alarmed at the sight of the fifty Furies that they passed a law reduc-

all connexion between tragedy and the dithyramb had been severed, the number of the choreutae in a tragic chorus was reduced to twelve. It has been suggested that this number was due to the practice of each poet exhibiting four tragedies at a time. It is supposed that the original chorus of fifty was divided as equally as possible among the four tragedies, so that each chorus came to consist of twelve members. The conjecture is a plausible one, but cannot be regarded as certain, owing to the scantiness of our information concerning the early history of tragedy. The size of the tragic chorus remained unaltered until the time of Sophocles, and in all the earlier plays of Aeschylus twelve choreutae are employed. Sophocles raised the number from twelve to fifteen<sup>1</sup>. After his time there was no further change during the great period of the Attic drama. The tragic chorus was always composed of fifteen persons. The various technical terms which refer to the arrangement of the tragic chorus are all based on the supposition that it is a chorus of fifteen. It is not quite certain whether the innovation of Sophocles was adopted by Aeschylus in his later plays. The *Oresteia* of Aeschylus was brought out ten years after the first appearance of Sophocles; and it has been contended that the chorus in this trilogy contained fifteen members. But there is hardly sufficient evidence to determine the matter with any certainty<sup>2</sup>. However, on general grounds it seems probable that Aeschylus should have followed

ing the number of the tragic chorus. The story is of course a fiction, on a par with the statement in the *Life*, that Aeschylus was banished to Sicily as a punishment for terrifying the people with his *Eumenides*.

<sup>1</sup> Suid. v. *Σοφοκλῆς*; Vit. Soph. p. 2 Dindf.

<sup>2</sup> The decision of the question depends on the passage in the *Agamemnon*, vv. 1344-1371. There is no doubt that the twelve iambic couplets, 1348-1371, were delivered by twelve choreutae. The difficulty is to decide whether the three trochaic tetrameters, 1344, 1346, and 1347, were delivered by three additional

choreutae, or by the coryphaeus. Either view is plausible, and it seems impossible to determine the matter without further evidence. The statement of Schol. Arist. *Equit.* 586, that the chorus in the *Agamemnon* was fifteen in number, is merely an inference from the passage just referred to. The statement of Schol. Aesch. *Eum.* 585, that the chorus in the *Eumenides* consisted of fifteen persons, is simply grounded on the assumption that the number was the same as in later times. In neither case is the evidence of any independent value.

the example of Sophocles. At any rate there is no doubt that after the middle of the fifth century the number of the choreutae was fixed at fifteen<sup>1</sup>. The satyric chorus was of the same size as the tragic—a natural result of the intimate connexion between tragedy and the satyric drama<sup>2</sup>. The comic chorus, as long as it continued to be an integral part of the play, invariably consisted of twenty-four members. All the authorities are unanimous on the subject<sup>3</sup>. These were the numbers adopted in the various kinds of drama throughout the classical period of Greek literature. But in later times, after the dramatic choruses had been reduced to insignificance, and merely provided the music between the successive acts, their size, at any rate in some theatres, appears to have been diminished. Thus the comic chorus at the Delphic Soteria contained only seven members; and the tragic chorus depicted on the wall-painting at Cyrene is also a chorus of seven<sup>4</sup>. Whether these cases were exceptional, or whether seven had now come to be the usual number of a theatrical chorus, there is no evidence to show.

The size of the chorus in the Greek drama was regulated by conventional rules, and no change was made to suit the requirements of a particular play. For instance, in the Suppliques of Aeschylus the number of the Danaïdes was fifty, but the chorus consisted of twelve maidens who did duty for the fifty. In the Suppliques of Euripides the actual suppliants were the seven wives of the slaughtered chieftains, but the chorus was raised to its proper number by the addition of female attendants. It has sometimes been suggested that in the

<sup>1</sup> Fifteen is the number given in Poll. iv. 109; Suid. v. χορός; Schol. Arist. Av. 298, Equit. 586; Schol. Aesch. Eum. 585. The number is given as fourteen in Vit. Aesch.; Bekk. Anecd. p. 746; Tzetzes, Prolegom. ad Lycophr. p. 254 M. The explanation of the discrepancy lies in the fact that when the chorus is said to consist of fourteen members the coryphaeus is not included.

<sup>2</sup> Tzetzes l. c. τὴν δὲ τραγῳδίαν καὶ

τοὺς σατύρους ἐπίσης μὲν ἔχειν χορευτὰς ἰα' (? ἰδ'). Id. apud Diibner, Prolegom. de Com. p. xxiv. ἐκκαίδεκα δὲ σατύρων, τραγῳδίας. Though the numbers are wrong in both passages, it is plain that the tragic and satyric choruses were of the same size.

<sup>3</sup> Poll. iv. 109; Schol. Arist. Av. 298, Acharn. 219; Bekk. Anecd. p. 746, &c.

<sup>4</sup> Lüders, l. c., p. 187 foll. Wieseler, Denkmäler, xiii. 2.



Eumenides, where the Furies are twelve or fifteen instead of three, legendary tradition was sacrificed to theatrical requirements. But, as there is no evidence to show that the number of the Furies had been settled at three as early as the time of Aeschylus, it is quite possible that in this case the usual size of the chorus was not inappropriate.

### § 3. *Costume of the Chorus.*

We come next to the costume of the chorus, which, as already pointed out, was entirely distinct from that of the actors. There are three kinds of chorus to be considered, the tragic, comic, and satyric. All these choruses wore masks, in accordance with the usual Bacchic tradition<sup>1</sup>. In other respects their costume had nothing in common, but was designed in accordance with the spirit of the respective types of drama. The tragic chorus was usually composed of old men, or women, or maidens. In such cases they wore the ordinary Greek dress, consisting of a tunic and a mantle. No attempt was made to give them an impressive appearance by the use of strange and magnificent costumes, similar to those worn by the actors. Such costumes were perfectly appropriate to the heroes and gods upon the stage, but would have been out of place in the chorus, which was generally supposed to represent the ordinary public. The masks of the tragic chorus would of course be suitable to the age and sex of the persons represented. A special kind of white shoe, said to be the invention of Sophocles, was worn by the tragic chorus<sup>2</sup>. Old men usually carried a staff<sup>3</sup>. Various little details in dress and equipment would be added according to circumstances. Thus the chorus of bereaved matrons in the *Suppliants* of Euripides were dressed in black garments, and had their hair cut short, as a sign of mourning; and carried branches twined with wool, the symbol of sup-

<sup>1</sup> Pausan. i. 28. 6; Schol. Arist. Nub. 343; Baumeister, Denkmäler, no. 422.

<sup>2</sup> Vit. Soph.

<sup>3</sup> Aesch. Agam. 75; Eur. Herc. Fur. 108.

plication, in their hands. The chorus of maidens in the Choephoroi, who had come to offer libations at the tomb of Agamemnon, were also dressed in black<sup>1</sup>. In some cases the tragic chorus was altogether of an exceptional character, and required a special costume. In the Suppliques of Aeschylus the daughters of the Aegyptian Danaus appear to have been dressed as foreigners. Probably the same was the case with the Persian Elders in the Persae. The Bacchantes in the play of Euripides carried tambourines in their hands, and were doubtless also provided with fawn-skins and wands of ivy<sup>2</sup>. But no tragic chorus ever caused a greater sensation than the chorus of Furies in the Eumenides of Aeschylus. Their costume was designed by Aeschylus himself, and the snakes in the hair, which afterwards became one of their regular attributes, were specially invented for the occasion. As they rushed into the orchestra, their black dresses, distorted features, and snaky locks, are said to have inspired the spectators with terror<sup>3</sup>. But this chorus was of a very unusual kind. In most cases the tragic chorus was composed of ordinary men and women, and their dress was that of everyday life.

The costume of the satyric chorus is a subject of very great interest. The choruses of goat-like satyrs who sang the dithyrambs in honour of Dionysus were the original source both of tragedy and of the satyric drama. These satyrs appear to have been an importation from the Peloponnesus. They are unknown to the oldest Ionic traditions. Among the primitive Ionians their place is taken by the Sileni—beings of a similar type, but resembling horses rather than goats<sup>4</sup>. Thus in the Homeric hymns it is the Sileni who are mentioned as companions of Dionysus, and there is no reference to the satyrs<sup>5</sup>. In the earliest Attic vases satyrs are never depicted, but only the horse-like Sileni. That the satyrs, with their goatish horns

<sup>1</sup> Eur. Suppl. 10, 97; Aesch. Choeph. 10, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Aesch. Suppl. 234-236 ἀνέλληνα στόλον | πέπλοισι βαρβάροισι καὶ πυκνώμασι | χλίωντα; Eur. Bacch. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Aesch. Eum. 52; vit. Aesch. p. 4 Dindf.; Poll. iv. 110; Pausan. i. 28. 6.

<sup>4</sup> See Furtwängler, Annali dell' Istituto, 1877, p. 225 foll., 449 foll.

<sup>5</sup> Hymn to Aphrodite, l. 262.

and tails, were a Doric conception is proved by various indications. In a fragment of Hesiod, where they are mentioned for the first time, the account of their genealogy which is there given connects them with Argos<sup>1</sup>. We hear of 'goat choruses' as an ancient institution at Sicyon<sup>2</sup>. Pratinas, the first celebrated writer of satyric drama, was a native of Phlius. As for the costume of the satyrs who formed the chorus of the primitive drama there is not very much evidence of an early date. Vases depicting Bacchic scenes are sufficiently common, but few of them can be shown to have any connexion with a dramatic performance. The earliest reliable testimony is that supplied by the Pandora vase<sup>3</sup>. This vase, which belongs to



FIG. 28.

the middle of the fifth century, contains a scene from the Pandora myth, and also a representation of a group of masked satyrs (Fig. 28) dancing round a flute-player. The satyrs are portrayed as half men and half goats. They have goat's horns upon their heads, and goat's hoofs instead of feet; and their tails are those of goats. Such seems to have been the appearance of a satyric chorus at the time the vase was painted. The next representation in point of date is that of the Naples vase (Fig. 29), which is about fifty years later. Here there is a considerable change in the make-up of the satyrs. The goatish element is less conspicuous. The goat's horns and hoofs have disappeared, and the tail is more like that of a

<sup>1</sup> Strabo, x. p. 471.

<sup>2</sup> Herod. v. 67.

<sup>3</sup> Journal of Hellenic Studies, xi.

plate xi, from which the present illustration is taken by permission of the Council of the Hellenic Society.

horse. In fact the type begins to approximate to that of the old Ionic Sileni, or horse-deities. The only part which resembles a goat is the shaggy skin round the loins. The style of satyr here depicted is the one which eventually prevailed in the theatre. Later representations of satyric choruses portray them in much the same way as the Naples vase, with goat's loins and horse's tails, but without hoofs or horns<sup>1</sup>. This evidence shows us that the satyr of the fourth and subsequent centuries was a modification of the original con-

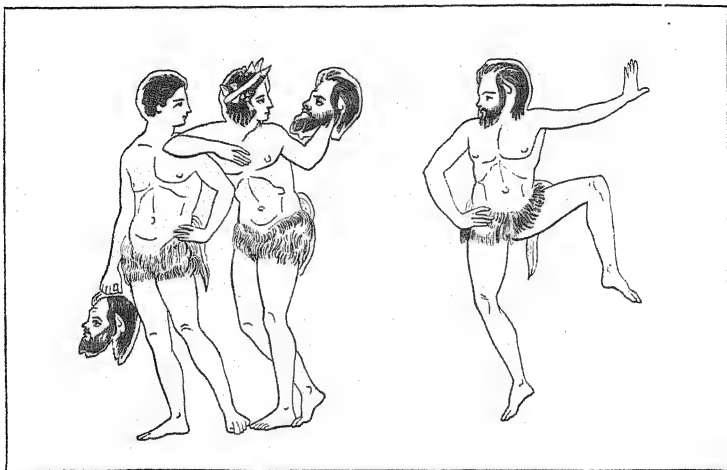


FIG. 29.

ception. The earliest stage satyrs were genuine goat-deities of the Doric type. But in the course of the fifth century there was a reaction in favour of the indigenous Sileni or horse-deities. The two types were mixed together, and so produced the conventional satyr of the later theatre<sup>2</sup>. Some scholars maintain that the type was the same from the first, and that the old dancers in the tragic and satyric drama

<sup>1</sup> Wieseler, *Denkmäler*, vi. 3. Baumeister, *Denkmäler*, no. 424. In the latter painting the tail and phallus are not visible: but this appears to be merely owing to the position of the two

satyrs. It can hardly be taken as evidence that the tail and phallus had been discarded at this time.

<sup>2</sup> See Körte, in *Bethe's Prolegomena*, p. 339 foll.

resembled Sileni more than satyrs<sup>1</sup>. But this theory is scarcely compatible with the evidence of the Pandora vase. The fact, too, that tragedy was called the 'goat-song' seems to prove decisively that the oldest choruses were composed of goat-like beings. There is also a fragment of a satyric play by Aeschylus in which one of the chorus-singers is actually addressed as a goat<sup>2</sup>. With this evidence before us we can hardly doubt that the Doric satyrs were the original performers in Attic tragedy and satyric drama, and that the Ionic element was introduced later on.

Some other points in connexion with the satyr's costume have still to be mentioned. The phallus, the regular symbol of Dionysiac worship, was invariably worn. The goat-skin round the loins was often replaced by a conventional substitute, consisting of drawers of some woven material, to which the tail and phallus were attached. Drawers of this kind are worn by all the satyrs in the Pandora vase, and by one satyr in the Naples vase, and are also found in a later painting<sup>3</sup>. Apart from the drawers and the goat-skin, the satyrs are represented in the works of art as perfectly naked<sup>4</sup>. But probably in the theatre they had flesh-coloured tights, similar to those used by the comic actors. Slippers were no doubt also used, and may in early times have been made in imitation of a hoof, as in the Pandora vase. In addition to the regular satyric costume the satyrs occasionally wore other clothes, suited to the part they played in the particular drama. Thus the satyrs in the Cyclops of Euripides, being servants of Polyphemus, were dressed in the ordinary leather jerkin of the serving-man<sup>5</sup>. Silenus, the head of the troop, was not a member of the chorus, but appeared upon the stage with the other actors. His dress has been described already. He was a sort of elderly satyr, and is to be distinguished from the old Ionic Sileni, whose appearance was entirely different. His origin is rather obscure; but he

<sup>1</sup> So Loeschke, Athen. Mittheil. 1894, p. 522; Bethe, Prolegomena, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Frag. 207 (Nauck) *τράγος γένειον ἄρα πενήσεις σύ γε*.

<sup>3</sup> Wieseler, Denkmäler, vi. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. Hor. A. P. 221 'mox etiam agrestes Satyros nudavit.'

<sup>5</sup> Cyclops 80 *σὺν τῇδε τράγῳ χλαίνα*.

may perhaps have been a later development, suggested by the requirements of the satyric drama.

The chorus in the Old Comedy, unlike that of the satyric drama, was of the most varied and fanciful character, and was drawn from every possible source. All classes and professions were introduced at some time or another<sup>1</sup>. There were choruses of Poets, Sophists, Athletes, Trades-women, Sorcerers, Knights, Drummers, and so on. Foreign nations were often represented, such as Persians, Macedonians, and Thracian women. Even individuals were multiplied into a species, and produced choruses of Hesiods and Archilochuses. In these cases, where the members consisted of human beings, they were dressed in the tunic and mantle of ordinary life, with such slight additions as were necessary to mark the different professions and nationalities. The mantle was laid aside for the purpose of dancing, as the dances of the Old Comedy were of a wild and energetic character, and required freedom of action<sup>2</sup>. The masks were of a ludicrous type, with the features distorted<sup>3</sup>. In addition to the human choruses there were also those composed of mythological beings, such as Furies, Amazons, Sphinxes, and Sirens. These would be dressed no doubt in the traditional costume. Many choruses consisted of fanciful and ridiculous personifications. There were choruses of Towns, Islands, and Merchant Ships; of Clouds and Seasons; of Dramas and Epistles. In all these cases the dress and general make-up appear to have been of a grotesque character, and only in a remote degree emblematic of the ideas and objects personified. For instance, the Clouds of Aristophanes appeared as women dressed in gaily-coloured garments, and wore masks of a ridiculous type, with long noses and other exaggerations. The only resemblance to Clouds was in the colours of the dresses<sup>4</sup>. Probably in other similar cases the personification was carried out in the same rough-and-ready manner. Another class of choruses was composed of various

<sup>1</sup> See the list of titles of comedies in Meineke, *Hist. Crit. Com. Graec.* p. 269 foll.

<sup>2</sup> Arist. *Acharn.* 627 ἀλλ' ἀποδύντες

τοῖς ἀναπαίστοις ἐπίωμεν; Thesm. 656 τῶν θ' ἱματίων ἀποδύσας.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Aristoph. *Nub.* 343.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. Aristoph. *Nub.* 289.

kinds of animals. We have the Birds and Wasps of Aristophanes; and we hear of other poets introducing Goats, Frogs, Vultures, Storks, Ants, Fishes, Bees, Nightingales, and so on. Choruses of this kind appear to have been a favourite institution among the Athenians, quite apart from the drama. A theory has been propounded that they were survivals of an old theriomorphic form of worship, and that they were the original source of the comic chorus<sup>1</sup>. As for their connexion with a primitive type of religion, this is a speculative subject with which we have no concern. But the notion that they were the prototype of the comic chorus seems to be entirely unsupported by evidence. This chorus consisted originally of the 'comus,' or band of revellers, who led the phallic processions in honour of Dionysus; and there is no reason to suppose that these revellers were dressed otherwise than as men. The varied character of the later chorus was due to the fancy and imagination of the Attic poets, who introduced all kinds of eccentric beings upon the stage, and among them choruses of animals. These latter, however, were only a small proportion of the whole, and it seems hardly justifiable to choose them out from the rest as specially connected with the origin of comedy. As regards the costume of these animal choruses, it would be highly interesting to know how it was managed. There are five vase-paintings of the early fifth century which depict such choruses dancing to the accompaniment of a flute-player; though it is doubtful whether in any case the performance is of a dramatic kind. One of these choruses consists of men disguised as horses, with knights riding on their shoulders; and it has been suggested that the chorus of Knights in Aristophanes was represented in this way<sup>2</sup>. But the idea seems impracticable. Two others depict men riding on ostriches or on dolphins<sup>3</sup>. In these pictures, however, the whole conception is far too fanciful and unreal to throw any light on the question of the

<sup>1</sup> Poppelreuter, *De Comoed. Atticae Primordiis*, 1893, p. 15. Loeschcke, *Athen. Mittheil.* 1894, p. 519. Cook, *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1894, p. 165 foll.

<sup>2</sup> So Poppelreuter, *l. c.* pp. 9-II. A copy of the vase is given on p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Bullettino Archeologico Napolitano*, Nuova Serie, v. tav. 7.

costume actually used in the theatre. In another vase the dancers are tall figures, with heads like those of a cock, and bodies enveloped in long cloaks<sup>1</sup>. A dress of this kind might have been employed upon the stage; but unfortunately the cloaks conceal so much of the dancer's person that the evidence of the vase is not very instructive. The best painting for our present purpose is one which represents a chorus of birds, and which is here reproduced (Fig. 30)<sup>2</sup>. The costume is clearly delineated. The bodies of the choreutae are covered with a close-fitting dress, made in rough imitation

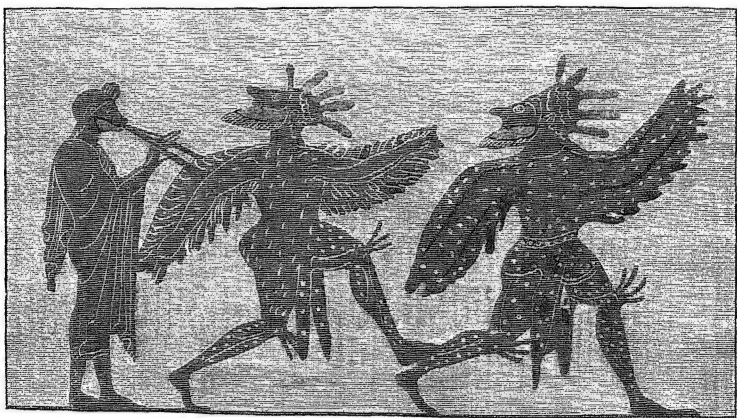


FIG. 30.

of feathers. Two long ends hang down from each side of the waist, and a bunch of feathers is affixed to each knee. The arms are provided with wings. A row of upright feathers is attached to the crown of the head, and the mask is made with a long and pointed nose, suggestive of the beak of a bird. From this painting we may obtain a fairly clear idea of the manner in which animals were imitated in the Old Comedy. We see that there was none of the realism one meets with in

<sup>1</sup> Journal of Hellenic Studies, ii. plate xiv A.

<sup>2</sup> The illustration is taken, by permission of the Council of the Hellenic

Society, from the Journal of Hellenic Studies, ii. plate xiv B. See Mr. Cecil Smith's interesting article on the subject.



a modern pantomime. The imitation was only carried so far as to be generally suggestive of the animal intended. The body and legs were left unfettered, to allow of free movement in the dance. At the same time, to judge from the specimen before us, the costumes seem to have been designed with a great deal of spirit and humour, and to have been extremely well adapted to the purpose for which they were intended.

#### § 4. *Arrangement of the Chorus.*

Except on rare occasions the dramatic choruses were drawn up in formations of military regularity, both on their first entrance, and during the progress of the play. They presented a perfectly symmetrical appearance in the orchestra. In this respect they offer a contrast to the choruses in a modern opera, and to the crowds which are introduced upon the modern stage. As a rule no attempt was made to imitate the fluctuating movements and haphazard grouping of an ordinary crowd. The chorus marched into the orchestra, and took up its position before the stage, with the regularity and precision of a body of soldiers. In all dramatic choruses—tragic, comic, and satyric—the rectangular formation was invariably adopted, as opposed to the circular arrangement of the dithyrambic choruses<sup>1</sup>. This quadrangular formation was probably of Doric origin<sup>2</sup>. Every dramatic chorus, when drawn up in this way, consisted of a certain number of 'ranks,' and a certain number of 'files.' For instance, the tragic chorus, with its fifteen members, contained five ranks of three men each, and three files of five men each. Similarly the comic chorus, which was composed of twenty-four persons, contained six ranks of four men each, and four files of six men each. According to the Attic phraseology a chorus was said to be drawn up 'by ranks' when the different members of the same rank stood one behind the other. It was said to be drawn up 'by files' when the members of the same file were

<sup>1</sup> Tzetzes, *Prolegom. ad Lycophr.* p. 254 M, τραγικῶν δὲ καὶ σατυρικῶν καὶ κωμικῶν ποιητῶν κοινὸν μὲν τὸ τετραγώνως ἔχειν ἰστάμενον τὸν χορὸν:

Pekk. *Anecd.* p. 746; *Et. Mag.* v. τραγῳδία; *vit. Aristoph.* (*Dindf. Prolegom. de Com.* p. 36).

<sup>2</sup> *Athen.* p. 181 C.

one behind the other. Accordingly, when a tragic chorus was drawn up 'by ranks,' the men stood five abreast and three deep. When it was drawn up 'by files,' they stood three abreast and five deep. The same regulations applied to the comic chorus. It might be arranged 'by ranks,' with the men six abreast and four deep; or 'by files,' with the men four abreast and six deep<sup>1</sup>. The arrangements throughout were of this military character. In fact the training of a choreutes was considered by many of the ancient writers to be an excellent preparation for warlike service<sup>2</sup>.

In the great majority of cases the chorus was supposed to consist of persons from the neighbourhood, and therefore entered the orchestra by the western passage. Their right side was towards the stage, and their left side towards the spectators. As a consequence, the left side of the chorus was much the most conspicuous and important, and the best-trained choreutae were placed there<sup>3</sup>. The tragic chorus might enter five abreast and three deep, or three abreast and five deep, according as the formation was by ranks or by files. As a matter of fact the arrangement by files was the one almost invariably adopted. There are several technical terms in connexion with the tragic chorus, and they all refer to a chorus which is supposed to be entering from the western side, and to be drawn up three abreast and five deep. An oblong formation of this kind would evidently be more convenient in the narrow side-entrances, and would present a broader surface to the spectators and to the stage. A diagram is here inserted, representing a tragic chorus entering three abreast from the western parodos. It will enable the reader to follow the various technical phrases with less

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 108, 109 καὶ τραγικοῦ μὲν χοροῦ ζυγὰ πέντε ἐκ τριῶν καὶ στοῖχοι τρεῖς ἐκ πέντε· πεντεκαίδεκα γὰρ ἦσαν ὁ χορός. καὶ κατὰ τρεῖς μὲν εἰσέβησαν, εἰ κατὰ ζυγὰ γίνοντο ἢ παράδος· εἰ δὲ κατὰ στοίχους, ἀνὰ πέντε εἰσέβησαν . . . ὁ δὲ κωμικὸς χορὸς τέτταρες καὶ εἰκοσιν ἦσαν οἱ χορευταί, ζυγὰ ἕξ, ἕκαστον δὲ ζυγὸν ἐκ τεττάρων, στοῖχοι δὲ τέτταρες, ἕξ ἄνδρας ἔχων ἕκαστος στοῖχος.

<sup>2</sup> Athen. p. 628 F.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Aristid. iii. p. 535 Dindf. ὅτε εἰσέβησαν οἱ χοροὶ πλαγίως βαδίζοντες ἐποιοῦντο τοὺς ὕμνους καὶ εἶχον τοὺς θεατὰς ἐν ἀριστερᾷ αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ πρῶτοι τοῦ χοροῦ ἀριστερὸν στοῖχον, p. 536 τοὺς οὖν καλοὺς τῶν χορευτῶν ἔτατον εἰσιόντες ἐν τοῖς τῶν ἑαυτῶν ἀριστεροῖς, ἵνα εὐρεθῶσι πρὸς τὸν δῆμον ὄρῶντες.

difficulty. When drawn up in this way the tragic chorus consisted of three files parallel to one another. As already stated, the first file was the most important, because it was nearest to the spectators. The members of this file were called 'aristerostatae,' or 'men on the left,' and consisted of the handsomest and most skilful of the choreutae. The middle file was the least important of the three, as it was most out of sight of the spectators. The worst choreutae were placed in this file, and were called 'laurostatae,' or 'men in the passage.' The third file was the one nearest to the stage. Occasionally, if the

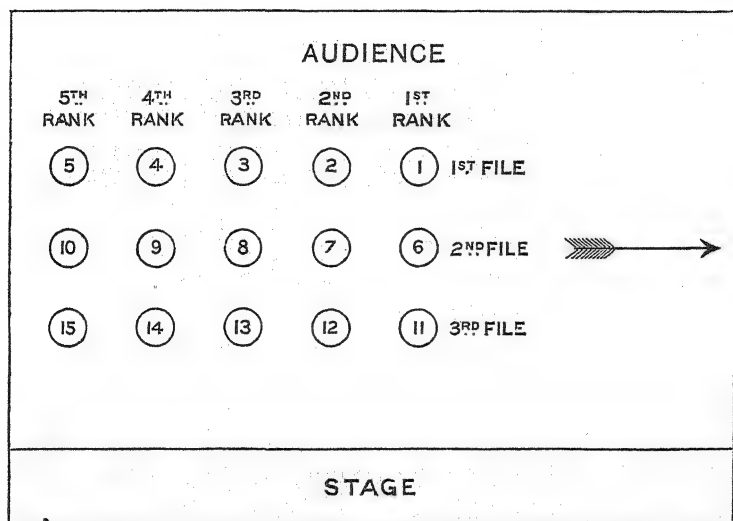


FIG. 31.

chorus wheeled completely round, it came in full view of the spectators. It was therefore of more importance than the middle file, and a better class of choreutae were placed in it. They were called the 'dexiostatae,' or 'men on the right'.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the above technical terms there were also special names for

<sup>1</sup> Poll. ii. 161 τάχα δὲ καὶ ὁ ἀριστεροστάτης ἐν χορῷ προσήκει ἀν τῇ ἀριστερᾷ, ὡς ὁ δεξιόστατης τῇ δεξιᾷ. Phot. v. λαυρόσταιται μέσον τοῦ χοροῦ· οἶονεῖ γὰρ ἐν στενωπῷ εἶσιν· φαυλότεροι δὲ οὗτοι. Hesych. λαυρόσταιται· οἱ ἐν τοῖς

μέσοις ζυγοῖ . . . μὴ θεωρούμενοι. The ὑποκόλπιον τοῦ χοροῦ, defined by Hesych. as τῆς στάσεως χώραι αἱ ἀτιμοί, probably included the whole file of laurostatae, though some scholars confine it to nos. 7, 8, and 9.

the six men who composed the front and hindmost ranks—nos. 1, 6, 11, 5, 10, and 15 in the diagram. They were styled 'kraspeditae,' or 'fringe-men'.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the three files had different names, according to their relative proximity to the spectators. The members of the left file were called 'front-line men'; the members of the middle and right-hand files were called 'second-line men' and 'third-line men' respectively<sup>2</sup>.

The first or left file, as already pointed out, was much the most important, because the members of it were in full view of the audience. The central position, no. 3 in the diagram, was occupied by the coryphaeus, or leader of the chorus<sup>3</sup>. The post of the leader was an extremely arduous one. While the dialogue was in progress, he had to carry on conversations with the actors upon the stage. During the choral odes he had to give the note to the choreutae, and superintend the dances and manœuvres. At the same time his own dancing and mimetic gestures were supposed to be a conspicuous feature in the performance. It is plain, therefore, that his position must have been a difficult one to fill. Demosthenes, speaking of dithyrambic choruses, says that the loss of the coryphaeus means the ruin of the chorus; and this must have been still more the case in a dramatic performance<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand the possession of a skilful leader would contribute very largely to the success of the chorus and of the drama. The choreutae on each side of the leader, nos. 2 and 4 in the diagram, were called his 'parastatae,' or 'assistants,' and were next in importance to the leader himself. The two choreutae

<sup>1</sup> Plut. Conv. p. 678 D ὥσπερ χοροῦ, τοῦ συμποσίου τῶν κρασπεδίτην τῷ κορυφαίῳ συνήκοον ἔχοντος. The κρασπεδίται were also called ψιλεῖς; cp. Suid. v. ψιλεῖς· ἐπ' ἀκροῦ χοροῦ ἰστάμενος: Hesych. v. ψιλεῖς· οἱ ὕστατοι χορεύοντες.

<sup>2</sup> Hesych. v. ἀριστεροστάτης· ὁ πρωτοστάτης τοῦ χοροῦ. Poll. iv. 106 δεξιόστατης, ἀριστεροστάτης, δευτεροστάτης, τριτοστάτης.

<sup>3</sup> Phot. v. τρίτος ἀριστεροῦ· ἐν τοῖς τραγικοῖς χοροῖς τριῶν ὄντων στοίχων

καὶ πέντε ζυγῶν, ὁ μὲν ἀριστερὸς πρὸς τῷ θεάτρῳ ἦν, ὁ δὲ δεξιὸς πρὸς τῷ προσκηνίῳ. συνέβαιεν οὖν τὸν μέσον τοῦ ἀριστεροῦ στοίχου τὴν ἐντιμωτάτην καὶ τὴν οἶον τοῦ πρωτοστάτου χώραν ἐπέχειν καὶ στάσιν. The coryphaeus was also called χορηγός Athen. p. 633 A, χοραγός Plut. Apophth. Lac. p. 219 E, ἡγεμῶν and ἡγεμῶν κορυφαῖος Dem. Meid. § 60, χοροστάτης Hesych., χορολέκτης Ael. Hist. An. xi. 1, χοροποιός Xen. Ages. ii. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Dem. Meid. § 60.

on the outside, nos. 1 and 5 in the diagram, were called the 'third men'.<sup>1</sup> As already remarked, the coryphaeus, together with the other four members of the left file, constituted the pick of the whole chorus.

Concerning the formation in which the comic chorus entered the orchestra there is\*not much information. Like the tragic chorus, it might enter either by ranks or by files; that is to say, it might come in six abreast and four deep, or four abreast and six deep. There can be no doubt that the oblong formation of four abreast and six deep was the one usually adopted. It would be more suitable from every point of view. Both the tragic and the comic choruses were probably preceded into the orchestra by the flute-player<sup>2</sup>. On certain rare occasions the formal entrance in a rectangular body was dispensed with, and an irregular mode of entrance was adopted, in order to produce a dramatic effect. The best example is in the Eumenides of Aeschylus. When the Furies made their second appearance, they came rushing into the orchestra one by one, in hot pursuit of Orestes, and created a profound sensation by their movements and appearance<sup>3</sup>. There is another instance in the Birds of Aristophanes. The birds begin by entering one by one. The flamingo comes first, and its appearance is criticised by the actors upon the stage. The cock follows, and is similarly criticised. Then comes the hoopoe, and after it the glutton-bird. These, as we have seen, were probably musicians. Finally the chorus of twenty-four birds come fluttering in together, so as to block up the side-entrances<sup>4</sup>. In the Lysistrata the chorus is divided into two halves, one consisting of men, the other of women. The chorus of men enters first; the chorus of women follows after an interval<sup>5</sup>. But instances of this kind were very rare and

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. Met. iv. 11 ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶν ὅσα πρὸς τι ἐν ὀρισμένον διέσθηκε κατὰ τὸν λόγον, ὅλον παραστάτης τριτοστάτου πρότερον, καὶ παρανήτης νήτης· ἐνθα μὲν γὰρ ὁ κορυφαῖος, ἐνθα δὲ ἡ μέση ἀρχή.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 304.

<sup>3</sup> Poll. iv. 109; Vit. Aesch. p. 4 Dindf.

<sup>4</sup> Arist. Av. 268-296.

<sup>5</sup> Arist. Lysist. 254, 319. In the Ecclesiazusae the chorus probably entered together at l. 285. The extra women in the first scene were not members of the chorus, but παραχορηγήματα.

exceptional. Usually the chorus entered in a rectangular body, with the precision of a troop of soldiers.

In most cases the entrance of the chorus took place at the conclusion of the 'prologue,' or introductory scene upon the stage; and the march in was accompanied by a chant, which was called the 'parodos,' or entrance song<sup>1</sup>. However, in a considerable number of plays there was no parodos at all, but the chorus entered the orchestra in silence, while the first act of the drama was in progress, and then commenced a musical dialogue with the actors upon the stage. Instances of this mode of entrance are to be found in such tragedies as the *Electra* of Sophocles and the *Orestes* of Euripides<sup>2</sup>. In the vast majority of Greek plays the entrance of the chorus was managed in one or other of the two ways just specified. Either the chorus came in at the termination of the prologue, chanting the parodos; or else the parodos was omitted, and the chorus entered in silence, and then proceeded to sing a musical duet with the actors. A few plays are exceptional, and do not conform to either of these two conventional types. Occasionally, for instance, there is no prologue, and the play begins with the parodos, as in the *Supplikes* and *Persae* of Aeschylus. This was no doubt the old-fashioned mode of commencement, derived from the times when the drama was still entirely lyrical. Then again, in the *Eumenides* the parodos is sung on the second entrance of the Furies, after their arrival at Athens. In the *Supplikes* of Euripides the chorus are seen kneeling upon the stage in supplication when the play commences. There they remain in silence during the performance of the prologue, and then proceed to sing an ode, in place of the usual parodos, from their position on the stage.

<sup>1</sup> Arg. Aesch. Pers. τῶν δὲ χορῶν τὰ μὲν ἐστὶ παροδικὰ, ὥς ὅτε λέγει δι' ἣν αἰτίαν παρέσθιν, ὥς τὸ "Τύριον οἶμα λιποῦσα." Schol. Eur. Phoen. παρόδος δὲ ἐστὶν ἑὴν χοροῦ βαδίζοντος ἀδομένη ἔμα τῇ εἰσόδῳ, ὥς τὸ "Σίγα σίγα λεπτὸν ἴχνος ἀρβύλης τίθετε." Aristot. Poet. c. 12 defines the parodos as ἡ πρώτη λέξις ὅλον χοροῦ. He thus extends the mean-

ing of the word so as to include, not only entrance-songs in the proper sense, but also those cases where the chorus enter in silence, and sing their odes later on.

<sup>2</sup> Other examples are the *Prom. Vinct.* of Aeschylus; the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles; the *Medea*, *Heracleidae*, *Troades*, and *Electra* of Euripides.

In the Clouds it appears that the chorus chant the first two odes behind the scenes, and then enter the orchestra silently. The Rhesus commences with a dialogue in anapaests between Hector and the chorus.

The next point to be considered is the position taken up by the chorus after entering the orchestra. On most occasions, as already stated, the chorus came in by the western side, drawn up in rectangular formation, with the stage on its right hand and the spectators on its left. It advanced half way into the orchestra, then came to a halt, and each member of the chorus turned round to the right, so as to face the stage. By this manœuvre the whole chorus was made to look towards the stage, and the arrangement by files was converted into one by ranks. For instance, the tragic chorus, which had entered three abreast and five deep, now stood before the stage five abreast and three deep. The coryphaeus and principal choreutae stood in the back line, and retained their position nearest to the spectators, and furthest away from the stage. This position they kept throughout the performance<sup>1</sup>. In a similar manner the comic chorus, after entering the orchestra four abreast and six deep, would halt in front of the stage, go through the manœuvre just described, and convert itself into a body standing six abreast and four deep. There is no information as to the position of the coryphaeus in the comic chorus. But there can be no doubt that, like the tragic coryphaeus, he stood in the back row, as near as possible to the spectators.

While the actors were upon the stage, and the dialogue was in progress, the chorus continued to stand with their backs towards the spectators, and their faces towards the stage,

<sup>1</sup> Müller (*die griech. Bühnen*. p. 214), following Hermann (*Opusc.* vi. 2, p. 144), supposes the whole chorus to have wheeled completely round, so that the left file came to be nearest to the stage. He thinks it more natural for the coryphaeus to have been immediately in front of the stage, where he would be in a position to converse with the actors. But he could do so equally well from the centre of the back row. And it

seems most improbable that care should have been taken, during the entrance into the orchestra, to place the coryphaeus and best choreutae in the line most conspicuous to the spectators, but that throughout the rest of the performance they should have been stationed in a position where the majority of the spectators would hardly have been able to see them.

so as to follow the course of the action<sup>1</sup>. This was their normal position during the play, and, although it may seem strange to our modern ideas, it was a necessary consequence of the peculiar circumstances under which the Greek drama was developed. When the stage was empty, the pauses between the acts were filled up by the choral odes called stasima. There is no reliable information as to the position and movements of the chorus during the performance of the stasima. As the singing was accompanied by dancing, the choreutae must have been moving to and fro. But in the absence of evidence it seems useless to venture on conjectures as to the exact nature of the evolutions. One thing may be regarded as certain, that during the performance of the stasima the chorus did not continue to face towards the empty stage, and turn their backs upon the audience. Such a position would have been quite unnatural and unmeaning. In the Old Comedy there was a peculiar sort of interlude called the parabasis, which came during a pause in the action, and consisted of a series of lyrics and addresses, delivered by the chorus, and dealing with ordinary topics of the day. While reciting the first part of the parabasis the chorus wheeled completely round so as to face the spectators. Hence the name 'parabasis,' which means 'a turning aside.' The latter part was antistrophical in form, and during its delivery the chorus separated into two divisions, which stood facing one another. The different portions of the parabasis were then given by each division in turn<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Anon. de Com. (Dindf. Prolegom. de Com. p. 29); Vit. Aristoph. (ibid. p. 36); Schol. Arist. Equit. 505.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. Arist. Equit. 505, Pax 733. As to the formation during the latter part of the parabasis, it is almost certain that the chorus was then divided into *ἡμichōria*. Two MSS. assign the strophe and antistrophe to *ἡμichōria* in *Nubes* 563, 595, *Vespae* 1060, 1091, *Aves* 737, 769, and the epirrhema and antepirrhema in *Ranae* 686, 717. See Arnoldt, *die Chorpartien bei Aristoph.*

p. 180 ff. That the half-choruses stood facing one another seems to be indicated by Hephaest. 14, p. 131 *ἔστι δέ τις ἐν ταῖς κωμῳδαῖς καὶ ἡ καλουμένη παρά-βασις, ἐπειδὴν εἰσελθόντες εἰς τὸ θέατρον καὶ ἀντιπρόσωπον ἀλλήλοις στάντες οἱ χορευταὶ παρέβαινον*: Anon. de Comoed. (Dübner, Prolegom. de Com. p. xx) *ἀπελθόντων δὲ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν πρὸς ἀμφοτέρω τὰ μέρη τοῦ δήμου ὁρῶν ἐκ τετραμέτρου δεκαεξή στίχους ἀναπαίστους ἐφθέγγετο, καὶ τοῦτο ἐκαλεῖτο στροφή.*



Sometimes, though not often, in the course of a play the chorus left the orchestra for a short period, and made a second entrance later on<sup>1</sup>. The instances of the practice which occur in the *Eumenides* and the *Ajax* were necessitated by the change of scene in those plays<sup>2</sup>. There is another example in the *Helena* of Euripides. Helen and the chorus retire into the palace, to enquire about the fate of Menelaus from Theonoe. In their absence Menelaus enters the stage, and recounts his adventures to the audience. Then Helen and the chorus return, and the recognition gradually takes place<sup>3</sup>. Similar temporary departures of the chorus are to be found in the *Alcestis* and the *Ecclesiazusae*; but they seem to have been of very rare occurrence<sup>4</sup>. At the end of the play the chorus retired by the passage from which it had entered, and was preceded by the flute-player<sup>5</sup>. In the *Seven against Thebes* the chorus leave the orchestra in two divisions, one following the body of Polyneices, the other that of Eteocles. But in most cases they probably marched out in the same rectangular formation in which they had entered.

### § 5. *The Delivery of the Choral Part.*

As regards the delivery of the words, the chorus, like the actors, was not confined to one manner only, but used song, speech, and recitative by turns, according to the varying character of the metre. The lyrical portions of the drama were almost invariably sung. The ordinary iambic trimeters were spoken. The systems of anapaestic dimeters, and the iambic, trochaic, and anapaestic tetrameters were delivered in recitative to the accompaniment of the flute<sup>6</sup>. A question now arises, which is of great interest and importance in connexion with the choral part of the performance. It is obvious to any reader of a Greek play that many of the speeches and songs assigned to the chorus were not intended to be delivered by

<sup>1</sup> Poll. iv. 108. The temporary departure was called *μετάστασις*, the return *ἐπιστάσις*.

<sup>2</sup> Aesch. *Eum.* 235; Soph. *Ajax* 815.

<sup>3</sup> Eur. *Hel.* 327 foll.

<sup>4</sup> Eur. *Alc.* 746; Arist. *Eccles.* 310.

<sup>5</sup> Schol. Arist. *Vesp.* 580.

<sup>6</sup> See chap. v. p. 299 foll.

the whole of the chorus, but by individual members. This fact is patent to every one. But when any attempt is made to settle the exact character of the distribution the greatest diversity of opinion prevails. The question as to the parts which were delivered by the whole chorus, and the parts which were delivered by sections or individuals, is one of the most intricate which the Greek drama presents. Unfortunately the ancient writers supply hardly any information upon the subject. The whole matter has been discussed and investigated in recent years with the greatest diligence, and attempts have been made to portion out the choral odes between different members and sections of the chorus on the strength of indications supplied by the metre, or by the sense of the words<sup>1</sup>. But it is plain that inferences based on evidence of this kind must be very uncertain in character. As a matter of fact different investigators have arrived at the most contradictory conclusions. It is impossible therefore to regard their suggestions otherwise than in the light of interesting conjectures. They have no claim to absolute acceptance. Hence in the present state of our knowledge any detailed account of the matter is out of the question. It will be necessary to be content with certain general conclusions, which are based on actual evidence, or are so plausible in themselves as to be very widely accepted.

First, then, as to the part taken by the chorus as a whole. In ordinary circumstances the parodos and the stasima appear to have been sung by the whole chorus together. The parodos, as already explained, was the song of the chorus on its first entrance. The stasima were the long and important odes inserted between the successive divisions of the play, in order to fill up the pauses in the action. It is natural in itself to

<sup>1</sup> See especially Arnoldt, *Die Chorpartieen bei Aristophanes* (Leipzig 1873), *Die chorische Technik des Euripides* (Halle 1878), *Der Chor im Agamemnon des Aeschylus* (Halle 1881); Christ, *Theilung des Chors im attischen Drama* (München 1877); Muff, *Die chorische Technik des Sophokles* (Halle

1877), *De choro Persarum* (Halle 1878), *Der Chor in den Sieben des Aeschylus* (Halle 1882); Hense, *Der Chor des Sophokles* (Berlin 1877), *Ueber die Vortragsweise Soph. Stasima* (Rhein. Museum, xxxii); Zielinski, *Die Gliederung der altattischen Komödie* (Leipzig 1885).

suppose that these portions should have been sung by the whole chorus, and the supposition is borne out by the statements of Aristotle<sup>1</sup>. Sometimes there were exceptions. For example, the chorus in the *Alcestis*, on its first entrance, is divided into two half-choruses, which sing successive passages of the *parodos* alternately. In the *Ion* the *parodos* is obviously sung by subdivisions or by individuals, and not by the whole chorus. In the *Frogs* a long speech by the coryphaeus is inserted in the middle of the *parodos*. In the *Lysistrata* the chorus is divided throughout the play into two half-choruses, one of men, the other of women<sup>2</sup>. But in the majority of cases the *parodos* and the *stasima* were given by the whole body of the chorus. Not infrequently, in the middle of the dialogue, small odes were inserted which resembled *stasima* in their general character, but differed from them in point of brevity, and from the fact that they came in the course of the dialogue, and not during a pause in the action. They were often songs of triumph or exultation, occasioned by sudden developments in the plot; and were accompanied by a lively dance<sup>3</sup>. These short odes were no doubt sung by the whole chorus, in the same manner as the *stasima*. It has been suggested that the strophes and antistrophes in the *stasima* were delivered by half-choruses in succession, and that the epode was given by the whole chorus. But there is no real evidence in support of this hypothesis, and epodes are only rarely to be met with in dramatic choruses.

<sup>1</sup> In Poet. c. 12 he defines the *παρῳδος* as ἡ πρώτη λέξις ὅλου χοροῦ, implying that other odes were also sung by the whole chorus. If so, the *στάσιμα*, which were far the most important of the other odes, must have been so sung. Whether the expression ὅλα χορικά μέλη, applied to the *στάσιμα*, means 'sung by the whole chorus,' or merely 'unbroken,' as opposed to the *κόμμοι*, is uncertain.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. Eur. Alc. 79 ἐκ γερόντων Φεραίων ὁ χορός, διαίρεται δὲ εἰς δύο ἡμιχορία. That the anapaests in *Ranae* 354-371, which come in the middle of the *parodos*, were spoken by the cory-

phaeus is proved by the concluding lines (ὕμεῖς δ' ἀνεγείρετε μολπὴν κ.τ.λ.), in which the rest of the chorus is commanded to begin.

<sup>3</sup> When these short odes were of a lively character, they were apparently called *ὑπορχήματα* by the grammarians, and regarded as a separate class. But even *stasima* might be composed in the hyporchematic style. It seems better, therefore, to regard *ὑπόρχημα* as a term applicable, not to short lyrics only, but to any lyrics of a lively and dance-like metre. See the *Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, pp. 357, 359.

In the second place some of the words assigned to the chorus were actually delivered by the coryphaeus. There is no direct testimony to this effect, but the matter hardly admits of doubt. On a great many occasions the chorus drops the tone of lyrical exaltation, and converses with the persons on the stage in an easy and familiar manner. It plays the part of an ordinary actor. In all such cases it is evident that the chorus must have been represented by the coryphaeus alone. The dialogues between the actors and the coryphaeus were a peculiar and distinctive feature of the old Greek drama. They were, in fact, a direct survival from the early period, when there was only a single actor upon the stage, and when the dramatic element in a play was necessarily confined to conversations between the actor and the chorus. In addition to the dialogues just mentioned, there are several other portions of the chorus which may be assigned to the coryphaeus with a fair amount of certainty. Such are the anapaests with which the approach of a new personage is announced at the end of a choral ode in tragedy. These anapaests, being delivered in recitative, would make a gentle transition from the song of the chorus to the speech of the actors. Then again, it is probable that in comedy all the anapaestic tetrameters were spoken by the coryphaeus, including the speech to the people at the commencement of the parabasis, and speeches such as that which is inserted in the parodos of the *Frogs*<sup>1</sup>. In comedy also the coryphaeus had frequently to address words of exhortation and remonstrance to the rest of the chorus<sup>2</sup>. As regards the anapaests at the beginning and the end of a play, the question is far more doubtful. It was the old fashion in tragedy for the entrance song of the chorus to commence with a series of anapaests. The custom is retained in the *Persae*, *Supplices*, and *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, and the *Ajax* of Sophocles. Most Greek plays also conclude with a few anapaests. It has been suggested that the verses in each case were delivered by the coryphaeus alone; but the suggestion is hardly a plausible

<sup>1</sup> See the previous page.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. *Arist. Ran.* 382, *Vesp.* 1516, *Thesmoph.* 655, &c.

one. If chanted in combination by the whole body of the chorus they would make its entrance and departure much more impressive. It need hardly be remarked that, when the chorus was divided into half-choruses, the part generally taken by the coryphaeus was in this case taken by the leaders of the two halves. For example, throughout the *Lysistrata* the chorus of men and the chorus of women were represented in the dialogue by their respective leaders. In the *Seven against Thebes* the concluding anapaests would be spoken by the leaders of the hemichoria. It is also highly probable that the two sets of trochaic tetrameters, which come at the end of the parabasis, were recited, not by the half-choruses, but by their leaders.

Thirdly, certain portions of the chorus were occasionally spoken or sung by individual choreutae. The best known example is in the *Agamemnon*, during the murder of the king, when the chorus stands outside the palace, debating helplessly as to what it ought to do, and each of the old men pronounces his opinion in turn. There is another instance in the lyrical ode at the commencement of the *Eumenides*. The Furies wake up, find that Orestes is gone, and reproach Apollo in a series of brief, detached sentences, each being sung by one member of the chorus<sup>1</sup>. The above examples admit of no doubt. Whether the practice was a common one, and whether the choral parts were frequently distributed among individual choreutae, is a matter of great uncertainty. It is manifestly unsafe to infer that it was done in all cases where the choral passage is full of mutual exhortations and addresses, and the language is broken up into disconnected sentences. For example, in the *parodoi* in *Aristophanes* the members of the chorus often address one another by name, and exhort one another to greater activity. But it does not therefore follow, as has been

<sup>1</sup> Aesch. *Agam.* 1344 ff., *Eum.* 140 ff., *Schol. ad loc.* ἀναστήσει αὐτὰς οὐκ ἄνθρωπος, μιμούμενος ἐμφατικῶς τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ἀλλ' ἐγείρεται τις πρῶτη, ὥστε μὴ ἄνθρωπος τὸν χορὸν φθέγγεσθαι. Müller (*Griech. Bühnenalt.* p. 218) is mistaken

in citing the passage in the *Lysistrata*, 727-780, as an example of the delivery of words by individual choreutae. The three women who take part in the dialogue are not members of the chorus, but performers upon the stage.

supposed, that these passages were delivered in portions by individuals. A chorus might be perfectly well chanted by the whole body, though written in vivid and dramatic style<sup>1</sup>. It is hardly safe therefore to distribute choral passages among individual choreutae except on very strong evidence. The extent to which the practice prevailed in the ancient drama must be regarded as an open question.

Fourthly, the division into half-choruses was not infrequent<sup>2</sup>. It might be done in two ways. In the first place the chorus throughout the whole play might be composed of two separate divisions, differing from one another in point of age, sex, or position. The chorus in the *Lysistrata*, consisting of one body of men, and one body of women, is an example. In the second place the chorus might be divided temporarily into half-choruses, either because of the special requirements of the play, or merely for purposes of singing and recitation. There are several certain examples in tragedy. In the *Ajax* of Sophocles the sailors hasten off, some to the east and some to the west, in search of Ajax. They return after a time from opposite sides of the orchestra, bringing word that they have not found him. In the *Orestes*, while Helen is being attacked within the palace, Electra keeps watch outside, and posts the chorus in two divisions at each end of the orchestra, to guard against surprise<sup>3</sup>. The examples in the *Alcestis* and the *Seven against Thebes* have already been referred to. In comedy the practice was not at all uncommon, if the testimony of certain manuscripts is to be accepted. Various choral passages in the comedies of Aristophanes are distributed between half-choruses, including

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the sensible remarks of the Schol. on Arist. *Ran.* 375 ἐντεῦθεν Ἀριστάρχος ὑπενόησε μὴ ὅλου τοῦ χοροῦ εἶναι τὰ πρῶτα· τοῦτο δὲ οὐκ ἀξιόπιστον. πολλάκις γὰρ ἀλλήλοις οὕτως παρακελεύονται οἱ περὶ τὸν χορόν.

<sup>2</sup> Poll. iv. 107 καὶ ἡμιχόριον δὲ καὶ διχορία καὶ ἀντιχόρια. εἶκοι δὲ ταῦτ' ὄναι ταῦτ' ἐν τρία ὀνόματα· ὅπ' ὅταν γὰρ εἰσὶν εἰς δύο μέρη τμηθῇ, τὸ μὲν πρᾶγμα καλεῖται διχορία, ἑκατέρα δὲ ἡ

μοῖρα ἡμιχόριον, ἃ δ' ἀνταδόνουν, ἀντιχόρια. The Schol. on Arist. *Equit.* 589 has a curious note to the effect that, when the chorus was divided into two halves of different sex or age, the older or stronger half was always slightly more numerous. In a comic chorus there would be 13 men to 11 women, 13 women to 11 boys, and so on.

<sup>3</sup> Soph. *Ajax* 866 ff.; Eur. *Orest.* 1258 ff.

the two odes at the end of the parabasis, and other lyrical pieces of an antistrophic character<sup>1</sup>.

The general result then is as follows. The words assigned to the chorus were delivered, sometimes by the whole chorus, sometimes by half-choruses, sometimes by the coryphaeus, and sometimes by individual choreutae. Whether there were any further subdivisions is uncertain. A suggestion has been made that the divisions into ranks and files were utilised for musical purposes; that in tragedy, for instance, successive passages were delivered in turns by ranks of three men, or files of five men; and that the ranks and files of the comic chorus were used in the same manner. All this is pure conjecture. It may or may not have been the case; but there is no evidence one way or the other. The portions of the choral part which were generally given by the whole chorus were the *parodoi*, or entrance-songs, and the *stasima*, or odes during the pauses in the dialogue. The portions assigned to the coryphaeus were principally those in which the chorus abandoned its lyrical elevation of tone, and spoke like one of the actors upon the stage. The various lyrical passages which occur in the course of the actual dialogue have still to be accounted for. These consist chiefly of short odes not unlike *stasima*, or of musical duets between the actors and the chorus. The odes were probably sung by the whole chorus. As to the musical duets it is impossible to speak with certainty. Whether they were mostly given by the whole chorus, or by halves, or smaller subdivisions, or by individual choreutae, or by the coryphaeus, is a matter concerning which there is no trustworthy information<sup>2</sup>. Such indications as are supplied by varieties in metre, grammar, or subject, are too vague and uncertain to lead to

<sup>1</sup> See Arnoldt, *Die Chorpartieen bei Aristophanes*, p. 180 ff., where a list is given of the passages which are assigned to half-choruses by Rav. and Ven., e.g. *Acham.* 1150, 1162, *Nub.* 563, 595, *Vesp.* 1060, 1091, *Av.* 737, 769, 1058, 1088, *Eccles.* 290, 301, *Thesmoph.* 659, *Lysist.* 321.

<sup>2</sup> Bergk's notion (*Griech. Lit.* iii. p. 131) that in *Arist. Poet.* c. 12 (*κοινὰ μὲν πάντων ταῦτα, ἴδια δὲ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ κόμμοι*) *ἴδια* = 'sung by individuals or sections' is clearly wrong. *ἴδια* = 'not found in all plays,' and the word to be supplied with *πάντων* is *δραμάτων*, not *χορευτῶν*.

any definite conclusion. Unless, therefore, further evidence of a distinct character is discovered, this particular question will have to be regarded as an unsettled problem.

### § 6. *The Dancing.*

In the ancient Greek drama, as in modern opera, the three sister arts of Music, Poetry, and Dancing, were all brought into requisition. But there was this difference—in the Greek drama the poetry was the principal feature of the performance; the music and the dancing were subordinate. Moreover dancing was seldom introduced by itself as a mere spectacle; it was mainly used in combination with singing, to interpret and add vividness to the words of the song. The music, the poetry, and the dancing were blended together into one harmonious whole, each part gaining an advantage by its combination with the other two. The dancing of the chorus is the subject which we have now to consider. It was an element of great importance in the old Greek drama. Most, if not all, of the choral songs were accompanied by dances of one sort or another. To the Greek mind there was an inseparable connexion between song and dance, and the notion of choral singing unaccompanied by dancing would have appeared strange and unusual. The two arts had grown and developed simultaneously, as appears from the fact that many of the technical terms in metrical phraseology referred originally to the movements of the dance. For instance, the smallest division of a verse was called a 'foot.' A verse of two feet was styled a 'basis,' or 'stepping.' The words *arsis* and *thesis*, which denoted the varying stress of the voice in singing, originally referred to the raising up and placing down of the foot in marching and dancing. These terms show how closely the two arts of dancing and singing were associated together in ancient Greece. A choreutes who was unable to accompany a song with expressive dance-movements was looked down upon as an inferior performer<sup>1</sup>. Dancing therefore, as might have been expected, played a

<sup>1</sup> Athen. p. 628 E *εἰ δὲ τις . . . ταῖς ᾠδαῖς ἐπιτυγχάνων μὴδὲν λέγει κατὰ τὴν ὀρχησιν, οὗτος δ' ἦν ἄδόκιμος.*



most important part in tragedy, comedy, and the satyric drama. It was held among the Greeks in the greatest estimation, and there was none of that feeling of degradation about it which was common among the Romans. A man might dance in public without any loss of dignity, provided the dance was of a graceful and becoming character. Sophocles himself, the great tragic poet and fellow general of Pericles, was not ashamed to appear in a dance in one of his own tragedies<sup>1</sup>.

At the same time it should be remembered that dancing in ancient Greece was a very different thing from dancing in modern times. It included a great deal more. The word 'dancing' in English necessarily implies movement with the feet. It would be impossible in English to say that a man was dancing, if he continued to stand in the same position. But in Greek dancing this was not necessarily the case. The word 'orchesis,' which we translate as 'dancing,' had in reality a much wider meaning. Greek dancing originated, according to Plato, in the instinctive tendency of mankind to accompany speech and song with explanatory movements of the body<sup>2</sup>. It was essentially a mimetic performance. It included, not only all such motions as are denoted by dancing in the modern sense of the word, but also every kind of gesture and posture by which various objects and events can be represented in dumb show. Its principal function was to interpret and illustrate the words of poetry. For this purpose nothing could be more important than appropriate gesticulation. Hence in Greek dancing the movements of the hands and arms played a larger part than the movements of the feet. The same was the case in Roman dancing also. A few quotations will illustrate this fact. Telestes, the celebrated dancer employed by Aeschylus, was said to be able to 'depict events with his hands in the most skilful manner'<sup>3</sup>. Demetrius the Cynic, after witnessing the performance of a celebrated dancer, exclaimed that he 'spoke with his hands'<sup>4</sup>. Ovid, in

<sup>1</sup> Athen. p. 20 F.

<sup>2</sup> Plat. Legg. 816 A.

<sup>3</sup> Athen. p. 21 F ἄκρως ταῖς χερσὶ τὰ λεγόμενα δεικνυούσας.

<sup>4</sup> Lucian, de Salt. 63 ταῖς χερσὶ λαλεῖν.

his Art of Love, when advising a lover to show off his best qualities before his mistress, tells him to sing if he has a good voice, to dance 'if his arms are flexible'. The flourishes and gesticulations with which a professional carver cut up a hare were called 'dancing' by the ancients<sup>2</sup>. Quintilian, speaking of the gestures used in oratory, gravely says that there ought to be a considerable difference between the orator and the dancer; that the gestures of the orator should represent the general sense of the words, rather than the particular objects mentioned<sup>3</sup>. The bare fact of his comparing an orator with a dancer is a proof of the vital difference between ancient and modern dancing, and the importance of mere gesticulation in the former.

The purpose, then, of ancient dancing was to represent various objects and events by means of gestures, postures, and attitudes. In this kind of mimicry the nations of southern Europe are particularly skilful, as may be seen at the present day. The art was carried by the Greeks to the highest perfection, and a good dancer was able to accompany a song with such expressive pantomime as to create a visible picture of the things described. Aristotle defines dancing as an imitation of 'actions, characters, and passions by means of postures and rhythmical movements'. His language indicates very clearly the unlimited capabilities of Greek dancing. Its general character will be well exemplified by the following account from Plutarch's *Symposiaca*. Dancing, it is there stated, might be divided into Motions, Postures, and Indications. Motions were of the greatest use in depicting actions and passions. Postures were the attitudes in which each motion terminated. For example, a dancer might halt in such a posture as to suggest Apollo, or Pan, or a Bacchante. Indications

<sup>1</sup> Ovid, *Ars Am.* i. 595 'si vox est, canta; si mollia brachia, salta.'

<sup>2</sup> Juv. v. 120 'structorem interea, ne qua indignatio desit, | saltantem spectes et chironomunta volanti | cultello.'

<sup>3</sup> Quint. *Inst.* xi. 3. 89 'abesse enim plurimum a saltatore debet orator, ut

sit gestus ad sensum magis quam ad verba accommodatus,' &c.

<sup>4</sup> Arist. *Poet.* c. 1 καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι (οἱ δρχησται) διὰ τῶν σχηματιζομένων ῥυθμῶν μιμνῶνται καὶ ἥθη καὶ πάθη καὶ πράξεις.

were not mimetic at all, but consisted in merely pointing out certain objects, such as the heaven, the earth, the bystanders. Dancing might be defined as poetry without words. The combination of poetry and dancing, of words and gestures, produced a perfect imitation<sup>1</sup>. In the above account from Plutarch we have a clear exposition of the Greek conception of dancing as the handmaid of poetry. Its function was to delineate and to emphasise the creations of the poet. This was the part which it played in the Greek drama. It is most important therefore, when speaking of dancing in connexion with the old dramatic performances, to remember the essential difference between the ancient and modern meaning of the words.

Some few facts have been recorded concerning the history of dancing in connexion with the drama. In the earliest times it consisted mainly of movements with the feet. The use of the hands and arms in dancing, and the introduction of elaborate gesticulation, was a development due to a later period<sup>2</sup>. In the old-fashioned dramas of Thespis and his immediate successors dancing necessarily played a very important part. Both tragedy and comedy were at that time mainly lyrical, and the long choral odes were accompanied throughout by dances. The early dramatists, such as Thespis, Phrynichus, Pratinas, and Cratinus, were called 'dancers' as well as poets, because one of their principal duties consisted in training their choruses in the art of dancing<sup>3</sup>. Phrynichus, in an epigram of which two verses are still preserved, boasts of having discovered more figures in dancing than there are waves in a stormy sea<sup>4</sup>. The tragic dance of the sixth century, to judge from the specimens given by Philocleon at the end of the Wasps, was of a wild and lively character<sup>5</sup>. The tone of solemnity, by which it was afterwards distinguished, was due to the innova-

<sup>1</sup> Plut. Symp. 747 B fol. The three divisions of dancing are *φοραί*, *σχήματα*, *δείξεις*.

<sup>2</sup> Athen. p. 630 B *πρώτη δὲ εὐρηται ἡ περὶ τοὺς πόδας κίνησις τῆς διὰ τῶν χειρῶν. οἱ γὰρ παλαιοὶ τοὺς πόδας μᾶλλον*

*ἐγυμνάζοντο ἐν τοῖς ἀγῶσι.*

<sup>3</sup> Athen. p. 22 A.

<sup>4</sup> Plut. Symp. 732 F *σχήματα δ' ὄρχησις τόσα μοι πύρεν, ὅσος' ἐνὶ πόντῳ κύματα ποιεῖται χεῖματι νῦξ ὅλοη.*

<sup>5</sup> Arist. Vesp. 1474 ff.

tions of Aeschylus. It was probably in the time of Aeschylus that dancing in tragedy reached its highest pitch of excellence. His long choruses gave ample opportunities for the display of the dancer's skill. Moreover, the training of the chorus was personally superintended by Aeschylus, and he is said to have himself invented a great number of postures and attitudes to be used in dancing<sup>1</sup>. Towards the end of the fifth century the art appears to have declined in significance, along with the general decrease in the importance of the chorus. It began to lose something of its mimetic character. Plato, the comic poet, who flourished at the end of the fifth century, contrasts the mediocrity of the choral dancing in his day with the excellence of that of a former period. In old times, he says, a good dancer was a sight worth seeing; but the choreutae of the present day stand in a row, like so many cripples, and bawl out their songs, without any attempt at appropriate motions and gestures<sup>2</sup>. This deterioration was a necessary consequence of the tendency to thrust the chorus more and more into the background.

The general character of the dancing in the Greek drama has already been described. As far as details are concerned our information is very defective, and only slight indications are to be obtained from the existing plays. It is probable that, when the parodoi commenced with a series of anapaests, the chorus only marched in, without dancing. But all parodoi written in lyrical metres were undoubtedly accompanied with a dance. The iambic and trochaic tetrameters, in which many of the parodoi in Aristophanes are written, seem to have been generally intended for choruses which entered running, and with an appearance of great haste<sup>3</sup>. The stasima, or long choral odes between the acts, are said by many of the scholiasts

<sup>1</sup> Athen. p. 21 E.

<sup>2</sup> Athen. p. 628 E ὥστ' εἰ τις ὀρχοῖτ' εἶ, θέαμ' ἦν· νῦν δὲ δρῶσιν οὐδέν, | ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἀπὸ πλῆκτοι στάδιον ἐστῶτες ὠρῶνται.

<sup>3</sup> Aristoph. Acharn. 204 τῆδε πᾶς ἔπου, δῖωκε, καὶ τὸν ἄνδρα πυρθάνου κ.τ.λ.,

Schol. ad loc. γέγραπται δὲ τὸ μέτρον τροχαϊκόν, πρόσφορον τῇ τῶν διωκόντων γερόντων σπουδῇ. ταῦτα δὲ ποιεῖν εἰώθασιν οἱ τῶν δραμάτων ποιηταὶ κωμικοὶ καὶ τραγικοί, ἐπειδὴν δρομαίως εἰσάγωσι τοὺς χοροὺς, ἵνα ὁ λόγος συντρέχη τῷ δράματι. Cp. Pax 301, 325, Plutus 257.

to have been unaccompanied by dancing, and to have been delivered by the chorus standing perfectly still<sup>1</sup>. The statement is no doubt an error, due to false etymology. The stasima, or 'stationary songs,' were so called, not because the chorus stood still during their delivery, but because it remained all the time in the orchestra. They were therefore opposed to the parodoi, which were delivered while the chorus was coming in, and to the exodoi, which were delivered while it was going out<sup>2</sup>. That the stasima were accompanied by dancing is proved by several references to dancing which they contain<sup>3</sup>. A tradition has been preserved by one scholiast concerning the manœuvres of the chorus in the stasima. It is said that during the strophe they moved to the right, during the antistrophe to the left; and that during the epode they remained standing in the same position as at first<sup>4</sup>. This description, however, has probably been applied to the drama by mistake. A manœuvre of the kind mentioned, though suitable to the circular chorus of the dithyramb, would be out of place in the rectangular formations of the dramatic choruses. Also it is comparatively rare to find epodes in the stasima. As for the incidental odes, which occur in the middle of the dialogue, many of those were written in the lively hyporchematic style, to mark the joy of the chorus at an unexpected turn of fortune. Some of the regular stasima were of the same type<sup>5</sup>. The dances by which these odes were accompanied were extremely brisk and energetic, in tragedy as well as in comedy<sup>6</sup>. The exodoi, or concluding utterances of the chorus, were not usually attended with dancing, but were delivered in recitative as the chorus marched out. There is

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Eur. Phoen. 202; Suidas v. *στάσιμον*, &c.

<sup>2</sup> On the use of *ἐξοδος* in this sense, see the Tragic Drama of the Greeks, p. 352. The word was also applied to the whole of the concluding scene of a tragedy.

<sup>3</sup> Aesch. Eum. 307 *ἀγε δὴ χορὸν ἄψωμεν*. Eur. Herc. Fur. 761 *πρὸς χοροῖς τραπέμεθα*. Arist. Thesmoph. 953 *ἔρμα. χάρει | κόψα ποσίν, ἄγ' ἐς κύκλον, | χειρὶ σύναπτε χεῖρα*. Other

passages of the same kind are not infrequent.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. Eur. Hec. 647 (p. 211 Dindf.).

<sup>5</sup> See above, p. 343, note 3.

<sup>6</sup> The liveliness of these dances, even in tragedy, is proved by such expressions as the following: Soph. Ajax 693 *ἔφριξ' ἔρωτι, περιχαρὴς δ' ἀνεπτόμαν*. Eur. Orest. 1353 *ὦ φίλοι, κτύπον ἐγείρετε, κτύπον καὶ βοᾶν*. El. 859 *θὺς ἐς χορὸν, ὦ φίλα, ἔχνοσ, | ὡς νεβρὸς οὐράνιον | πήδημα κομφίζουσα σὺν ἀγλαῖα*.

an exception in the Wasps and the Ecclesiazusae, which are terminated by the chorus dancing out of the orchestra. But Aristophanes himself remarks that this was an innovation<sup>1</sup>. There is no reason to suppose that in tragedy the kommoi, or musical dialogues between actors and chorus, were unaccompanied with dancing. But naturally, if this was the case, the dance would be of a quiet and sober kind, consisting more of appropriate gestures and motions than of dancing in the modern sense of the word.

During a large part of every Greek play the chorus had nothing to say or sing, but merely stood watching the actors, and listening to the dialogue. It would be absurd to imagine that they remained stolid and indifferent during all this period. Chorus and actors were supposed to form one harmonious group, and no doubt the chorus followed the events upon the stage with a keen appearance of interest, and expressed their sympathy with the different characters by every kind of gesture and by-play. Occasionally the long descriptive speeches delivered from the stage were accompanied with a mimetic dance on the part of the chorus<sup>2</sup>. The events described by the actor were represented in dumb show by the choreutae. In comedy it was a regular practice to introduce descriptive speeches of this sort, the metres used being iambic or anapaestic tetrameters, which were especially suitable for dancing to. There is an example in the Clouds, where Strepsiades describes his quarrel with Pheidippides. The various phases of the quarrel were represented in dumb show by the chorus, keeping time with the recitative of the actor<sup>3</sup>. Again, we are told that Telestes, the dancer employed by Aeschylus, 'danced the Seven against Thebes' so successfully as to bring the various events before the very eyes of the spectators. The statement no doubt refers to the dumb show with which he

<sup>1</sup> Arist. Vesp. 1536 τοῦτο γὰρ οὐδεὶς πω πάρος δέδρακεν, | ὀρχούμενον ὅστις ἀπῆλλαξεν χορὸν τρυγῶδων, Schol. ad loc. εἰσέρχεται γὰρ ὁ χορὸς ὀρχούμενος, οὐδαμῶς δὲ ἐξέρχεται. Eccles. 1179 αἶρεσθ' ἄνω, λαί, εὐαί.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. Arist. Ran. 924 ἡ πρὸς τὰς ῥήσεις ὑπόρχησις.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Arist. Nub. 1355 οὕτως ἔλεγον πρὸς χορὸν λέγειν, ὅτε τοῦ ὑποκριτοῦ διατιθεμένου τὴν ῥῆσιν, ὁ χορὸς ὀρχεῖτο.

accompanied the long descriptive speeches that abound in that play<sup>1</sup>.

Each of the three different species of the drama had its own special kind of dance. The tragic dance was called the 'emmeleia.' It was grave and majestic in its motions, and was one of the two dances approved of by Plato, and admitted into his ideal republic<sup>2</sup>. Some of the postures or figures in the tragic dance are mentioned by the ancient writers. One of them represented a man in the act of thrusting with the sword; another depicted a man in an attitude of menace, with clenched fist. The rest are a mere list of names, of which the meaning is uncertain. But it is plain from the existence of such lists that the art of tragic dancing was reduced to a regular system, and that the various attitudes and postures were taught in a methodical manner<sup>3</sup>. We can hardly be mistaken in assuming that as a rule the movements of the tragic dance were slow and deliberate, and more like walking than dancing in the modern sense. The odes called 'hyporchemata,' with their lively motions, were only adopted in tragedy on special occasions, to show the excessive joy of the choreutae<sup>4</sup>. The kommos at the conclusion of the Persae gives us a vivid picture of the general style of a tragic dance. The Persian Elders follow Xerxes on his way to the palace, bewailing the ruin of the empire in mournful strains. At each fresh exclamation of grief they fall into some new posture, first beating their breasts, then plucking their beards, then rending their garments, then tearing their hair; and in this manner they gradually make their exit from the orchestra<sup>5</sup>.

The comic dance was called the kordax. Its movements were coarse and lascivious, and its general style was suggestive of the phallic songs out of which comedy had been developed.

<sup>1</sup> Athen. p. 22 A 'Αριστοκλῆς γοῶν φησιν ὅτι Τελέστης, ὁ Αἰσχύλου ὀρχηστής, οὕτως ἦν τεχνίτης, ὥστε ἐν τῷ ὀρχεῖσθαι τοὺς Ἐπτά ἐπὶ Θήβας φανερά ποιῆσαι τὰ πράγματα δι' ὀρχήσεως.

<sup>2</sup> Plat. Legg. 816 A.

<sup>3</sup> Suid. v. ξιφισμός; Hesych. v. ξιφί-

ζειν; Poll. iv. 105 καὶ μὴν τραγικῆς ὀρχήσεως σχήματα σιμῇ χεῖρ, καλαβίσκος, χεῖρ καταπρηνής, ξύλου παράληψις, διπλῆ, θερμανστρίς, κυβίστησις, παραβῆναι τέταρα.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 343, note 3.

<sup>5</sup> Aesch. Pers. 1038 foll.

It was a dance for drunken people, and no one but a man without any sense of shame would dance it when he was sober. It was considered vulgar and disgraceful by Plato, and excluded from his commonwealth<sup>1</sup>. Aristophanes, in the *Clouds*, takes credit to himself for having abandoned it in that play; but, as the scholiast remarks, he frequently introduces it elsewhere<sup>2</sup>. In the comic dances the wildest movements were admissible. The chorus, at the end of the *Wasps*, when encouraging the sons of Carcinus to fresh exertions, bid them 'whirl round like tops, and fling their legs up into the sky.' Occasionally the circular dance of the dithyrambic chorus was adopted in comedy<sup>3</sup>.

The dance used in the satyric drama was called the 'sikinnis.' It was mainly a parody and caricature of noble and graceful dances, and was very violent and rapid in its movements. One of the postures used in the satyric dance was called the owl, and is variously explained by the old grammarians as having consisted in shading the eyes with the hands, or in turning the head to and fro like an owl<sup>4</sup>.

### § 7. *The Music.*

The music of a Greek play was simple in its character, and altogether subordinatè to the poetry. As Plutarch remarks, it was a sort of seasoning or relish, the words being the main attraction<sup>5</sup>. Any comparison therefore between a Greek play and a modern opera, as far as the music is concerned, must be entirely illusive. In the first place all Greek choral singing was in unison. The use of harmony in choral compositions was apparently unknown to the Greeks. Even in modern times Greek Church Music has retained the practice of chanting in unison.

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Arist. Nub. 542 κórδαξ κωμική, ἦτις αἰσχρῶς κινεῖ τὴν δσφύν. Hesych. v. κórδαξ; Plat. Legg. p. 816 A; Theoph. Char. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Arist. Nub. 540 οὐδὲ κórδαξ εἰλκυσεν.

<sup>3</sup> Arist. Vesp. 1529 στρόβει, παράβαινε κύκλω καὶ γάστρῳ σεαυτὸν, | ῥίπτει σκέλος οὐράνιον βέμβικες ἐγγενέσθων.

Thesm. 953 ὄρμα, χάρει | κοῦφα ποσίν, ἄγ' ἐς κύκλον, | χειρὶ σύνανπτε χεῖρα.

<sup>4</sup> Poll. iv. 99, 103; Athen. p. 629 F-630 A; Dion. Hal. A. R. vii. 72; Phot. v. σκώπενμα.

<sup>5</sup> Plut. Symp. 713 C τὸ δὲ μέλος καὶ τὸν ῥυθμὸν ὥσπερ ὄφον ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ, καὶ μὴ καθ' αὐτὰ προσφέρεσθαι.



Consequently the general style of the music in a Greek drama must have been exceedingly simple and severe compared with the intricate combinations of modern music. In the second place, the music was fitted to the words, instead of the words being subordinated to the music. Each note of the music corresponded, in most cases, to a separate syllable of the verse, and the time of the music was determined entirely by the metre of the verse. The ode was chanted in unison, syllable after syllable, by the whole body of the choreutae. The modern practice of adapting the words to the exigencies of the music, and making different parts of the chorus sing different words at the same time, was altogether unknown. Hence it is probable that the words of a Greek chorus were heard with considerable distinctness by the whole audience. When all the singing was in unison, and the notes of the music corresponded to the syllables of the verse, there was no reason why this should not be the case. In modern choral singing the poetry is so far sacrificed to the music that even the general drift of the words cannot usually be distinguished with much clearness. But this could never have been the case in the ancient drama, where the lyrical portions of the play often contained the finest poetry and the profoundest thoughts of the whole composition. The choreutae were doubtless made to sing with great precision and distinctness of utterance; and this training, combined with the simple character of the music, would make it possible for the words of an ancient chorus to be heard without difficulty. In the third place, the instrumental accompaniment was limited in amount, and was never allowed to predominate. As a rule it was given by a single flute or harp, and was the same, note for note, as the melody. In lyrical, as opposed to dramatic, poetry there was a tendency for the flute to overpower the voices. Pratinas, in a lyrical fragment still preserved, complains of this practice, saying that 'the Muse has made Poetry the mistress: let the flute play the second part; it is but the servant of Poetry<sup>1</sup>!' These words, which only refer to a tendency in the lyrical poets

<sup>1</sup> Pratinas apud Athen. p. 617 B τὰν αὐλὸς | ὕστερον χορευέτω· καὶ γὰρ ἐστὶ δαῖδαν κατέστας Περὶς βασιλείαν· ὁ δ' ὑπηρέτας.

of the time, are significant as showing the Greek conception of the relative position of instrument and voice in choral singing. In the Greek drama, as already remarked, the instrumental portion of the music was altogether subordinate; and the music as a whole was made subservient to the words and the poetry.

Greek music was written in various Modes, as they were called, concerning the nature of which there has been much conflict of opinion. Some scholars maintain that the Modes were distinguished from one another, like the modern major and minor scales, by the order of the intervals in the octave. But the more probable view seems to be that the difference was one of pitch, like the difference between the keys in modern music<sup>1</sup>. These Modes, whatever their exact character, were each of them associated with a particular kind of music. Every Mode had a special kind of metre and of melody appropriated to itself, and a composition in a given Mode was necessarily of a certain well-defined character. The difference between the music of the several Modes was very much the same as that between various kinds of national music in modern times. For example, an air in the Phrygian Mode bore the same sort of relation to one in the Lydian as a lively Swiss song bears to a plaintive Irish melody. Of the various Modes used in Greek music the tragic poets selected those which were most suited to their purpose. The Dorian and the Mixolydian Modes were the two most commonly employed in tragedy. The Dorian was majestic and dignified in style; the Mixolydian was pathetic. The one was used in the solemn and profound choral odes, the other in cases where deep emotion had to be expressed<sup>2</sup>. Besides these two principal Modes, certain others were occasionally employed. The old Ionic Mode was severe and sober, before the degeneracy of the Ionic nation had altered its character. It was therefore well adapted to tragedy, and was used by Aeschylus<sup>3</sup>. The music of the Phrygian Mode

<sup>1</sup> See, on the whole question, Monro's *Modes of Ancient Greek Music*, Oxford, 1894.

<sup>2</sup> *Plat. Mus.* 1136 D-F.

<sup>3</sup> *Heracleid. ap. Athen.* p. 625 B; *Aesch. Suppl.* 69 Ἰαονίους νόμους.

was passionate and enthusiastic, and was first introduced into tragedy by Sophocles<sup>1</sup>. The Hypodorian and the Hypophrygian Modes were only employed in the songs of the actors upon the stage, and not in choral odes. The reason was that the style of their music was better suited to realistic acting than to choral singing<sup>2</sup>. Sometimes a few notes of instrumental music were inserted by themselves, at intervals in the choral songs, as a sort of refrain. The 'phlattothrat,' which recurs in the parody of Aeschylus' lyrics in the Frogs, is an instance of such a refrain, the instrument used being the harp. The flute was also employed in the same way. Such refrains were called 'diaulia'<sup>3</sup>.

During the latter part of the fifth century the character of Greek music underwent a considerable change. The severity and simplicity of the music of the Aeschylean period were succeeded by a style in which softness, variety, and flexibility were the prominent features. The author of the movement was the celebrated musician Timotheus<sup>4</sup>. His innovations were regarded by the philosophers and old-fashioned critics as so many corruptions of the art of music, and as a proof of the growing effeminacy of the age<sup>5</sup>. In one of the comedies of Pherecrates the person of Music is made to complain of the treatment she has received at the hands of various composers, and ends her complaint by charging Timotheus with having outraged and insulted her more than any one else had done, and compares his florid melodies to the 'intricate movements of ants in a nest<sup>6</sup>.' The new kind of music was very generally adopted by the later tragic poets, such as Euripides and Agathon, and is frequently ridiculed by Aristophanes<sup>7</sup>. Euripides appears to have foreseen from the first that the new style would

<sup>1</sup> Vit. Soph. p. 8 Dindf.

<sup>2</sup> Aristot. Prob. xix. 30. 48.

<sup>3</sup> Arist. Ran. 1286 ff.; Hesych. v. διαύλιον· ὅπου τὰν ἐν τοῖς μέλεσι μεταξὺ παραβάλλη μέλος τι ὁ ποιητὴς παρσιωπήσαντος τοῦ χοροῦ.

<sup>4</sup> Suid. v. Τιμόθεος. Plut. Mus. 1135 D.

<sup>5</sup> Suid. l. c. τὴν ἀρχαίαν μουσικὴν ἐπὶ τὸ μαλακώτερον μετέγαγεν.

<sup>6</sup> Pherecrat. Cheiron. frag. 1 (Meineke, F. C. G. ii. p. 326) ᾄδαν ἐκτραπέλους μυρμηκίας.

<sup>7</sup> Arist. Ran. 1301 foll., Thesm. 100 μύρμηκος ἀτραπούς, ἢ τί διαμύρεται; Schol. ad loc. ὡς λεπτὰ καὶ ἀγκύλα ἀνακρουόμενον μέλη τοῦ Ἀγάθωνος· τοιαῦται γὰρ αἱ τῶν μυρμηκῶν ὁδοί.

soon become popular. On a certain occasion, when a novel composition by Timotheus was loudly hissed in the theatre, he told him not to be discouraged by his temporary want of success, as in a few years he would be sure to have every audience at his feet<sup>1</sup>. The prediction was verified by the result.

<sup>1</sup> Plut. an seni etc. 795 C.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE AUDIENCE

#### § I. *Composition of the Audience.*

THE theatre of Dionysus at Athens, during the period of the Lenaea and the City Dionysia, presented a spectacle which for interest and significance has few parallels in the ancient or the modern world. On these occasions the city kept universal holiday. Business and politics were forgotten; the law-courts were closed; even prisoners were released from gaol, to enable them to partake in the general rejoicings. The deity in honour of whom the festivals had been established was Dionysus, the god of wine, and the type of the productive power of nature. The various proceedings were in reality so many religious celebrations. But there was nothing of an austere character about the worship of Dionysus. To give freedom from care was his special attribute, and the sincerest mode of paying homage to his power was by a genial enjoyment of the various pleasures of life. At this time of universal merriment the dramatic performances formed the principal attraction. Each day soon after sunrise the great majority of the citizens made their way to the southern slopes of the Acropolis, where the theatre of Dionysus was situated. The tiers of seats rising up the side of the hill were speedily filled with a crowd of nearly twenty thousand persons. The sight of such a vast multitude of people, gathered together at day-break in the huge open amphitheatre, and dressed for the most part in white, or in red, brown, yellow, and other rich

colours, must have been exceedingly striking and picturesque. The performances which brought them together were not unworthy of the occasion. The plays exhibited at the festivals of Dionysus rank among the very noblest achievements of Greek genius. For beauty of form, depth of meaning, and poetical inspiration they have never been surpassed. The point of unique interest about the Greek drama is the superlative excellence of its productions, combined with the fact that it was essentially a national amusement, designed for the entertainment of the great mass of the citizens. It would be difficult to point to any similar example of the whole population of a city meeting together each year to enjoy works of the highest artistic beauty. It is seldom that art and poetry have penetrated so deeply into the life of the ordinary citizens. Our curiosity is naturally excited in regard to the tone and composition of the audiences before which a drama of such an exceptional character was exhibited. The object of the following chapter will be to bring together and present in one view all the available information upon this subject.

At the Lenaea, which was held in the winter, when travelling was difficult, the audience consisted almost exclusively of natives of Athens. The City Dionysia came about two months later, at the commencement of the spring, and attracted great crowds of strangers from various parts of Greece. Representatives from the allied states came to pay the annual tribute at this season of the year. It was also a favourite time for the arrival of ambassadors from foreign cities; and it was considered a mere matter of politeness to provide them with front seats in the theatre, if they happened to be in Athens during the celebration of the City Dionysia<sup>1</sup>. In addition to these visitors of a representative character, there were also great numbers of private individuals, attracted to Athens from all parts of Greece by the magnificence of the festival, and the fame of the dramatic exhibitions. Altogether the visitors formed a considerable portion of the audience at the City

<sup>1</sup> Dem. de Cor. § 28.

Dionysia. One of the great aggravations of the offence of Meidias was that his assault upon Demosthenes was committed in the presence of 'large multitudes of strangers'.<sup>1</sup> Apparently the natives of foreign states were not allowed to purchase tickets for the theatre in their own name, but had to get them through an Athenian citizen<sup>2</sup>.

The composition of the purely Athenian part of the audience is a subject upon which a great deal has been written, the principal difficulty being the question as to the admittance of boys and women to the dramatic performances. In the treatment of this matter scholars appear to have been unduly biassed by a preconceived opinion as to what was right and proper. Undoubtedly Athenian women were kept in a state of almost Oriental seclusion. And the old Attic comedy was pervaded by a coarseness which seems to make it utterly unfit for boys and women. For these reasons some writers have gone so far as to assert that they were never present at any dramatic performances whatsoever<sup>3</sup>. Others, while not excluding them from tragedy, have declared that it was an impossibility that they should have been present at the performances of comedy<sup>4</sup>. But the attempt to draw a distinction between tragedy and comedy, in regard to the admission of boys and women to the theatre, will not bear examination. If they were present at one, they must have been present at both. The tragic and the comic competitions frequently took place upon the same days, and succeeded one another without any interval; and it is difficult to suppose that, after the tragedies were over, a large part of the audience had to be turned out before the comedies could begin. Moreover, if women and boys had been present at the tragedies, they would of necessity have been spectators of the satyric dramas, which were nearly as coarse as the comedies. It is

<sup>1</sup> Dem. Meid. § 74.

<sup>2</sup> Theophrast. Char. 9 καὶ ξένους δὲ αὐτοῦ θέαν ἀγοράσας μὴ δοῦς τὸ μέρος θεωρεῖν.

<sup>3</sup> E. g. Böttiger, Kleine Schriften i. p. 295 ff.; Wachsmuth, Hellen. Alter-

thumskunde ii. p. 391; Bergk, Griech. Literatur. iii. p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> E. g. Bernhardt, Griech. Litterat. ii. 2. p. 132; Böckh, Trag. Princip. p. 37; Meineke, Menand. et Philem. Reliq. p. 345.

useless therefore to endeavour to separate tragedy from comedy in the consideration of this question.

As a matter of fact the evidence upon the subject, if considered without prejudice, makes it practically certain that there were no restrictions of the kind suggested. The audience at the dramatic performances, whether tragic or comic, was drawn from every class of the population. Men, women, boys, and slaves were all allowed to be present. The evidence from ancient authors is too copious to be accounted for on any other supposition. There are three passages in Plato which in themselves are almost enough to decide the question. In one place, speaking of poetry in general, and more especially of tragedy, Plato says it is a kind of rhetoric addressed to 'boys, women, and men, slaves, and free citizens without distinction.' In another place, where he is treating of the management of his ideal republic, he says there will be no great readiness to allow the tragic poets to 'erect their stages in the market-place, and perform before women and children, and the general public.' A passage of this kind would have very little point, unless it was intended as a condemnation of the prevailing practice. In a third place he declares that if there was a general exhibition of all kinds of public amusements, and the audience were called upon to state what they were most pleased with, the little children would vote for the conjuror, the boys for the comic poet, the young men and the more refined sort of women for the tragic poet<sup>1</sup>. These three passages of Plato are hardly consistent with the supposition that the drama was a spectacle which boys and women were never allowed to witness.

In addition to the above evidence there are also several places in Aristophanes where boys and women are referred to as forming part of the audience. They must therefore have been present at the performances of the Old Comedy. For instance, in the *Clouds* Aristophanes prides himself on having refrained from introducing the phallus 'to make the boys laugh.' In the *Peace* he says that 'both the boys and

<sup>1</sup> Plat. Gorg. 502 B-E, Legg. 817 A-C, 658 A-D.



the men' ought to wish for his victory in the contest, because of his boldness in attacking Cleon. In another part of the Peace, when some barley is thrown among the male part of the spectators, Trygaeus remarks that the women have not got any<sup>1</sup>. Other passages of the same kind might be quoted. That women were present at the New Comedy is proved conclusively by a letter of Alciphron, in which Menander is supposed to be writing to his mistress Glycera. In this letter he says that nothing is dearer to him than to be crowned with the ivy of Dionysus, as victor in the comic contest, 'while Glycera is sitting in the theatre and looking on'. Other pieces of evidence are as follows. In Lucian's dialogue Solon tells Anacharsis that the Athenians educate their sons by taking them to tragedies and comedies, and showing them examples of virtue and vice, so as to teach them what to imitate and what to avoid<sup>3</sup>. In the Frogs there is the well-known passage in which Aeschylus taunts Euripides with the immorality of his plays, which have caused women of refinement to commit suicide from very shame. If women were never present at the performance of the tragedies of Euripides, there would be very little meaning in the reproach<sup>4</sup>. Then again we are told that when Alcibiades was choregus, and 'entered the theatre' dressed in a splendid purple robe, he was admired 'not only by the men, but also by the women'<sup>5</sup>. The shameless person in Theophrastus smuggles his sons into the theatre with a ticket which belongs to some one else. The miser never takes his sons to the theatre except when the entrance is free<sup>6</sup>. The regulation of Sphyromachus, providing that men, women, and courtesans should sit apart from one another, can hardly have referred to any place but the theatre<sup>7</sup>. The cumulative effect of all these passages is difficult

<sup>1</sup> Aristoph. Nub. 537-539, Pax 765, 766, 962-967. Cp. also Arist. Pax 50 ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν λόγον γε τοῖσι παιδίοις . . . φράσω; Eupolis, Προσπάλτιοι, fr. 2 (Meineke, Frag. Com. Gr. ii. p. 521) Ἡράκλεις, τοῦτ' ἔστι σοι | τὸ σκῶμ' ἄσελγές καὶ Μεγαρικὸν καὶ σφόδρα |

ψυχρόν. γελῶσιν, ὡς ὕρᾱς, τὰ παῖδια.

<sup>2</sup> Alciphron, Epist. ii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Lucian, Anachar. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Aristoph. Ran. 1050, 1051.

<sup>5</sup> Athen. p. 534 C.

<sup>6</sup> Theophrast. Char. 9 and 13.

<sup>7</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Eccles. 22.

to resist. It is impossible to explain them all away by far-fetched interpretations. Even the story of the effect produced by the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus upon the audience—of the boys dying of fright and the women having miscarriages—such a story, though in itself a foolish invention, could hardly have originated unless women and boys had been regularly present at the theatre<sup>1</sup>. That they were admitted at a later period is proved by the direct evidence of inscriptions in the theatre of Dionysus, which show that in Hadrian's time seats were specially reserved for priestesses and other women<sup>2</sup>. This fact would not of course be conclusive evidence as to the custom which prevailed in the classical period of Athenian history. But, as far as it goes, it tends to confirm the conclusions based upon the evidence of ancient authors.

No doubt at first sight it appears a very startling fact that women and boys should have been spectators of the Old Comedy. But it should always be remembered that the comedies performed at the festivals of Dionysus were a portion of a religious celebration, which it was a pious duty to take part in. Ribaldry and coarseness were a traditional element in the worship of Dionysus, handed down from rude and primitive times, and were not lightly to be dispensed with. The Greeks in such matters were thoroughly conservative. It was a feeling of this kind which caused the satyric drama to be developed side by side with tragedy, in order that the old licentious merriment of the satyrs might not be utterly forgotten. The coarseness of the Old Comedy, being a regular part of the celebrations in honour of Dionysus, might be witnessed by boys and women without degradation, though their presence at similar scenes in real life would have been regarded in a very different manner. Where the worship of the gods was concerned, the practice of keeping women in strict seclusion was allowed to drop into abeyance. Women and even girls were present at the phallic processions in

<sup>1</sup> Vit. Aeschyli, p. 4 Dindf.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Inscr. Att. iii. 282, 313, 315,

316, 321, 322, 324, 325, 333, 342, 343,

345, 350, 351, 354, 361, &c.

honour of Dionysus<sup>1</sup>. Their appearance on such occasions was regarded as a mere matter of course. It need not therefore surprise us that women and boys should have been present in the theatre at the performances of the Old Comedy.

Whether they were ever present in large numbers is a further question. Even those writers who admit that their presence was not prohibited by law, generally add that the more respectable women would in all probability keep away<sup>2</sup>. But the only authority for such a notion is to be found in a couple of passages in Aristophanes, which represent the husband as present in the theatre, while the wife was at home<sup>3</sup>. There is nothing so unusual in an occurrence of this kind as to warrant any sweeping conclusions. Some people must necessarily have remained at home, from the mere fact that the theatre would not have been large enough to contain the whole population of Athens, if men, women, and children had all been present. But it is hardly probable, for the reasons already stated, that there was anything disreputable in a woman visiting the theatre. Reformers like Aristotle were in advance of ordinary public opinion in their feelings about such matters. There is a passage in Aristotle's *Politics* which is of great interest as showing the general sentiment on the subject<sup>4</sup>. Aristotle expresses a strong opinion that boys should be prevented from seeing or hearing any piece of coarseness or indecency. Even if such ribaldry is an essential feature in the worship of any particular deity, he says that only men should be allowed to be present. The men should pay the proper homage to gods of this character

<sup>1</sup> Aristoph. *Achar.* 241-246; Menand. *Frag. Incert.* 32 (Meineke, *Frag. Com.* Gr. iv. p. 243).

<sup>2</sup> E. g. Müller, *Die griech. Bühnenalterthümer.* p. 291.

<sup>3</sup> Aristoph. *Av.* 793-796 εἴ τε μοι-  
χεύων τις ὑμῶν ἐστίν ὅστις τυγχάνει,  
κἀθ' ὅρῳ τὸν ἄνδρα τῆς γυναῖκος ἐν  
βουλευτικῷ, | οὗτος ἂν πάλιν παρ' ὑμῶν  
περυγίσας ἀνέπατο, | εἴτα βυθήσας ἐκεί-  
θεν αὔθις αὖ καθέζετο. *Thesm.* 395-  
397 ὥστ' εὐθὺς εἰσίντες ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερῶν |  
ὑποβλέπουσ' ἡμᾶς, σκοποῦνται τ' εὐ-

θέως | μὴ μοιχὸς ἔνδον ἢ τις ἀποκεκρυ-  
μένος.

<sup>4</sup> Aristot. *Pol.* vii. 17 ἐπιμελὲς μὲν οὖν  
ἔστω τοῖς ἄρχουσι μὴθὲν μήτε ἀγαλμα  
μήτε γραφὴν εἶναι τοιούτων πράξεων  
μίμησιν, εἰ μὴ παρὰ τισι θεοῖς τοιούτοις  
οἷς καὶ τὸν τωθασμὸν ἀποδίδωσιν ὁ νόμος·  
πρὸς δὲ τοῖς ἀφίησιν ὁ νόμος τοὺς  
ἔχοντας ἡλικίαν πλέον προσήκουσαν καὶ  
ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν καὶ τέκνων καὶ γυναικῶν  
τιμαλφεῖν τοὺς θεοὺς. τοὺς δὲ νεωτέρους  
οὗτ' λαμβάνω οὔτε κωμῳδίας θεατὰς νομο-  
θετητέον.

on behalf of themselves, their wives, and their children ; but boys should not be permitted to be witnesses of comedies and similar spectacles. This passage, in which Aristotle is combating the prevailing practice of the times, is an additional proof that boys were present at the performance of comedies, and shows clearly that when the worship of the gods was concerned ordinary public opinion did not consider such spectacles improper.

Besides women and children it appears that slaves were occasionally present at the theatre. Plato in the *Gorgias* mentions slaves as one of the classes before which the tragic poets will not be allowed to perform in his ideal commonwealth<sup>1</sup>. The shameless man described by Theophrastus takes the 'paedagogus' to the theatre, along with his sons, and crowds them all into seats which did not really belong to him<sup>2</sup>. It is not, however, probable that the number of slaves among the audience was ever very great. Their presence would depend upon the kindness of their masters. But the two passages just quoted prove that there was no law to prevent their attendance.

### § 2. *Price of Admission.*

The dramatic entertainments at Athens were provided by the state for the benefit of the whole people. The entrance was originally free, and every man was allowed to get the best seat he could. But, as the drama was extremely popular from the very first, the struggle for seats caused great disturbances. People used to come and secure places the night before the performance began ; citizens complained that they were crowded out of the theatre by foreigners ; blows and fights were of frequent occurrence. It was therefore decided to charge a small entrance fee, and to sell all the seats in advance. In this way the crush of people was avoided, and, as each man's seat was secured for him, he was able to go to the theatre at a more reasonable hour<sup>3</sup>. The price of a seat for one day's perform-

<sup>1</sup> Plat. *Gorg.* 502 D.

<sup>2</sup> Theophrast. *Char.* 9.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Lucian. *Tim.* 49 ; Suidas v. *θεωρικόν*.

ance was two obols. The same price appears to have been charged for all the different parts of the theatre, with the exception of the reserved seats for priests, officials, and other distinguished persons<sup>1</sup>. A gradation of prices, according to the goodness and badness of the seat, would probably not have been tolerated by the democracy, as giving the rich too great an advantage over the poor.

Until the close of the fifth century every man had to pay for his place, although the charge was a small one. But the poorer classes began to complain that the expense was too great for them, and that the rich citizens bought up all the seats. Accordingly, a measure was framed directing that every citizen who cared to apply should have the price of the entrance paid to him by the state. The sum given in this way was called 'theoric' money. It used formerly to be supposed, on the strength of statements in Plutarch and Ulpian, that this theoric system was introduced by Pericles<sup>2</sup>. But the recently discovered Constitution of Athens has now shown that it was of much later date. The originator of the grant was the demagogue Cleophon, who succeeded Cleon in the leadership of the democracy. The year in which he introduced it is not given; but it must have been in the interval between the death of Cleon in 422 and his own death in 404. The amount of the payment was two obols, the price of a single seat. It is said that soon afterwards Callicrates, another demagogue, promised to raise the grant to three obols, the object apparently being to provide an extra obol for refresh-

<sup>1</sup> Dem. de Cor. § 28 ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖν δυοῖν ὀβολοῖν ἰθεώρουσιν ἄν. This passage shows that there cannot have been any alternative between the reserved seats for distinguished persons and the ordinary two-obol seats. Two obols is also the sum mentioned by Phot., Suid., and Etym. Mag. vv. *θεωρικόν*; Etym. Mag. *θεωρικά*; Liban. Hyp. to Dem. Olynth. i; Schol. Aristoph. Vesp. 1184. The entrance fee is given as one obol by Ulpian on Dem. Olynth. i. § 1; and as three

obols by Schol. Dem. de Cor. § 28. But both are no doubt mistaken. It is given as a drachma by Schol. Lucian, Tim. 49; Phot. and Suid. vv. *θεωρικά*; Philochorus apud Harp. v. *θεωρικά*. But the drachma probably denotes the aggregate fees for successive days at one festival. Plat. Apol. 26 D has most likely no reference to the theatre. See above, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> Plut. Pericl. 157 A; Ulpian on Dem. Olynth. i. § 1.

ments<sup>1</sup>. But this promise was probably never carried out, as two obols is the sum usually mentioned in later times as the theoric grant for a single day<sup>2</sup>. Of course if the festival lasted for several days, and there were performances in the theatre on each of them, the amount given by the state would be increased in proportion. Thus certain authors speak of a grant of four obols, or of six; but they are referring no doubt to the sum given for the whole festival<sup>3</sup>. The theoric money was distributed in the different townships. Every man whose name was entered on the town lists as a full citizen might claim his share<sup>4</sup>. But it is probable that at first only the poorer classes applied. No one, however, was allowed to obtain the grant unless he made his application in person. A certain Conon, who succeeded in getting the money in the name of his son, who was absent at the time, was fined a talent for the offence<sup>5</sup>. In its original form this theoric system may seem not altogether indefensible. The theatrical performances were a sort of religious celebration, provided by the state; and it was unreasonable that any citizen should be debarred from attending them by poverty. But in the course of the fourth century the system was expanded and developed until it became a scandalous abuse. Grants were given, not only for the Dionysia, but for all the other Athenian festivals, to provide the citizens with banquets and means of enjoyment. The rich began to claim the money with quite as much eagerness as the poor. The military revenues were impoverished in order to supply the Theoric Fund, which had now grown to huge proportions. A law was passed making it a capital offence to even propose to divert this theoric money to any other purpose. As a consequence the resources of the state were crippled, and the people demoralized. The theoric question became one of the

<sup>1</sup> Athen. Pol. c. 28 (see Kenyon's and Sandys' notes).

<sup>2</sup> Dem. de Contrib. § 169; Phot., Suid., Etym. Mag. vv. θεωρικόν; Etym. Mag. v. θεωρικά; Liban. and Ulpian, ll. cc. It was called διαβολία (Aristot. Pol. ii. 7) or διαβελία (Athen. Pol. c. 28; Bekk. Anecd. 237, 15).

<sup>3</sup> Four are mentioned in [Dem.] Proem. 53; six in Schol. Lucian, Tim. 49; Lucian, Encom. Dem. 36; Suid. δραχμὴ χαλαῖσα; Suid., Harp., and Phot. θεωρικά.

<sup>4</sup> Dem. in Leoch. § 37.

<sup>5</sup> Hyperid. in Dem. col. xxiv.

chief difficulties which Demosthenes had to deal with, in his efforts to rouse the Athenian people to action against Philip<sup>1</sup>.

The tickets of admission in the ancient theatre appear to have generally consisted of small leaden coins stamped with some theatrical emblem<sup>2</sup>. Such coins could easily be renewed and stamped afresh for the different festivals. Many of them have been discovered in modern times, both in Attica and elsewhere, and date from the fifth century down to the Christian era. The specimen which is here given (Fig. 32) contains a representation of three comic masks, with the name of the play, the *Prophetess*, inscribed above, and the name of the poet, Menander, underneath<sup>3</sup>. In addition to these leaden



FIG. 32.

coins certain tickets made of ivory or bone, and apparently connected with the theatre, have also been preserved. But they are far fewer in number than the leaden coins, and only date from the Christian era. They are found solely in Graeco-Roman districts. They are too elaborate and permanent in workmanship to have served as ordinary tickets, and were probably intended for the occupants of the reserved seats in the front rows. They usually contain some figure or emblem on the one side, and a description of the emblem in Greek on the other, together with a number in Greek and Latin.

<sup>1</sup> Harp. v. *θεωρικά*; Liban. Hyp. to Dem. Olynth. i.; Ammonius, de diff. vocab., v. *θεωρίς*; Dem. Olynth. i. § 19, de Cor. § 118, Philipp. iv. § 38.

<sup>2</sup> For a full account of these theatre-

tickets see Benndorf, Zeitschrift für die österreichischen Gymnasien, 1875, pp. 579-595.

<sup>3</sup> The illustration is taken from Baummeister, Denkmäler, no. 1833.

The specimen in the text (Fig. 33) exhibits the head of Kronos in front, with the inscription 'Kronos' and the number thirteen behind<sup>1</sup>. The numbers never rise higher than fifteen, and cannot therefore refer to the individual seats in the different rows. Probably both the numbers and the emblems denote particular blocks of seats. We know that in the theatre at Syracuse certain blocks were called after the names of gods and princes, such as Hieron, Zeus, and Hercules; and that in the Roman theatre Germanicus gave his name to a particular block<sup>2</sup>. It is a very plausible conjecture, therefore, that emblems like that of Kronos refer to some similar method of designation.

Besides the two kinds of ticket just described, a large number

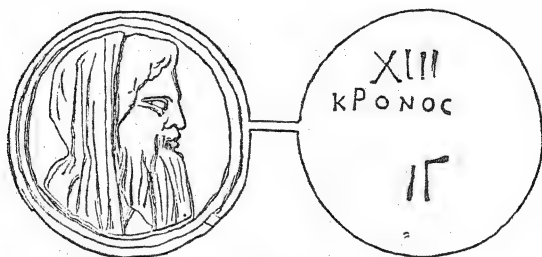


FIG. 33.

of bronze coins have been found in Athens and Attica, of which the exact significance is uncertain. But Svoronos, the latest writer on the subject, is inclined to think that they too were intended as marks of admission to the theatre<sup>3</sup>. These coins date from the fourth to the second century B. C. On the front side they are generally stamped with an image of Athene, or a lion's head, or a group of owls. On the reverse there is a letter of the alphabet, either single, or repeated more than once (Fig. 34). Sometimes there is no symbol on the coin, but both the front and the reverse side contain the same alphabetical letter or letters. It is possible, as Svoronos thinks, that these coins were theatrical tickets, and that the letters,

<sup>1</sup> It is taken from Baumeister, no. 1835.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Gr. 5369; Tac. Ann. ii. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Svoronos, *περὶ τῶν Εἰσιτηρίων τῶν*

*ἀρχαίων*, in *Journal International d'Archéologie Numismatique*, 1898, vol. i, pt. i, pp. 37-120. The illustration in the text (Fig. 34) is taken from this article.



of which there are at least fifty-two varieties, referred to various divisions of seats in the auditorium.

The receipts from the sale of places in the theatre went to the lessee. The arrangement in this matter was a peculiar one. The lessee was a person who entered into a contract with the state, by which he undertook to keep the fabric of the theatre in good repair, and in return was allowed to take all the entrance money. If he failed to keep the theatre in good condition, the state did the necessary repairs itself, and made him pay the expenses. He had to provide reserved seats in the front rows for distinguished persons, and it is uncertain whether the state paid him for these seats or not. For all the other portions of

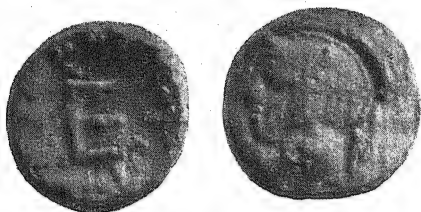


FIG. 34.

the theatre he was allowed to charge two obols and no more<sup>1</sup>. Occasionally, towards the end of a performance, he seems to have allowed the people free admittance, if there was any room to spare<sup>2</sup>.

### § 3. *The Distribution of the Seats.*

When the theatre was full the audience numbered nearly twenty thousand persons. As to the arrangement of this

<sup>1</sup> The lessee was generally called *ἀρχιτέκτων* (Dem. de Cor. § 28), because part of his contract was to look after the buildings of the theatre. He was also called *θεατροπώλης* (Poll. vii. 199), from the fact of his selling seats; and *θεατρώνης* (Theophrast. Char. 11), from the fact of his having taken the theatre on lease. The nature of the arrangement with the lessee may be gathered from (1) Corp. Ins. Att. ii.

573, in which the lessees of the theatre at the Peiraeus engage to keep the fabric in good repair; (2) Dem. de Cor. § 28 ἢ θέαν μὴ κατανεῖμαι τὸν ἀρχιτέκτονα αὐτοῖς κελεύσαι; (3) Ulpian on Dem. Olynth. i. § 1 ὥστε λαμβάνειν . . . δύο ὀβολούς, ἵνα . . . τὸν δ' ἄλλον παρέχων ἔχωσι τῷ ἀρχιτέκτονι τοῦ θεάτρον.

<sup>2</sup> Theophrast. Char. 30.

enormous mass of people some few facts are known, and some inferences may be made; but the information is not very complete. The great distinction was between the dignitaries who had reserved seats in the front, and the occupants of the ordinary two-obol seats at the back. A gradation of seats with descending prices was, as previously stated, unknown to the ancient Athenians. The privilege of having a reserved seat in the theatre was called 'proedria,' and was conferred by the state<sup>1</sup>. From the large number of persons who enjoyed the distinction it is clear that several of the front rows must have been reserved; and this conclusion is confirmed by the inscriptions in the theatre, which show that seats were assigned to particular individuals as far back as the twenty-fourth tier from the front<sup>2</sup>. The recipients of the honour, or at any rate the more prominent of them, were conducted in a solemn procession to the theatre each morning by one of the state officials<sup>3</sup>.

Foremost among the persons who had seats in the front rows were the priests and religious officers connected with the different divinities. That they should be distinguished in this manner was only in keeping with the essentially religious character of the ancient Greek drama. An inscription referring to the theatre at the Peiraeus, and belonging to the third or fourth century B.C., mentions the priests specially by name as the most conspicuous members of the class who had the 'proedria'<sup>4</sup>. The inscriptions upon the seats in the theatre at Athens, which represent for the most part the arrangement that existed during the reign of Hadrian, place the matter in a very clear light. They enable us to determine the occupants of sixty out of sixty-seven seats in the front row; and it is

<sup>1</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Equit. 572. Pollux, iv. 121, states rather doubtfully that the *προεδρία* in the theatre might also be called *πρῶτον ξύλον*. If the expression was really used, it must have dated from the time when the theatre was still a wooden one.

<sup>2</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iii. 240-384.

<sup>3</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 589 shows that in the Peiraeus the demarch used to conduct the persons honoured with

proedria to the theatre. A similar practice was no doubt observed at Athens.

<sup>4</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 589 καὶ εἰσαγέτω αὐτὸν ὁ δημαρχὸς εἰς τὸ θέατρον καθάπερ ἱερεῖς καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους οἷς δέδοται ἡ προεδρία παρὰ Πειραιέων. Cp. also Hesych. v. νεμήσεις θέας 'Ἀθηναῖοι τὰς ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ καθέδρας, ψηφίσματι νενομένας προεδρίας ἱερεῶσιν.

found that of these sixty persons no less than fifty were priests, or ministers connected with religion. Similarly, in the rows immediately behind the front row, a large number of places were set apart for the different priests and priestesses<sup>1</sup>. Such was the arrangement in the time of Hadrian, and there can be little doubt that it was much the same in its general character during the period of the Athenian democracy.

Among state officials the nine archons and the ten generals had distinguished places in the theatre. In Hadrian's time the archons occupied seats in the front row, and it is probable that this position was assigned to them from the earliest period<sup>2</sup>. The generals were in some prominent part of the theatre, but the exact place is not known. The snob in Theophrastus was always anxious to sit as near to them as possible<sup>3</sup>. Ambassadors from foreign states, as was previously pointed out, were generally provided with front seats, on the motion of some member of the Council. Demosthenes is taunted by Aeschines for the excessive politeness which he showed to Philip's ambassadors on an occasion of this kind. The lessee of the theatre at the Peiraeus, as appears from an inscription still extant, was ordered to provide the ambassadors from Colophon with reserved places at the Dionysia. The Spartan ambassadors were sitting in 'a most distinguished part of the theatre' when they considerably gave up a place to an old man for whom no one else would make room<sup>4</sup>. The judges of the various contests sat together in a body, and would naturally be provided with one of the best places in the theatre<sup>5</sup>. The orphan sons of men who had fallen in battle received from the state, in addition to other honours, the distinction of 'proedria.' The same privilege was frequently conferred by decree upon great public benefactors, and was generally made hereditary in the

<sup>1</sup> Corp. Ins. Att. iii. 240-384. Dörpfeld, Griech. Theater, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> The thrones of seven of the archons are still preserved (Corp. Ins. Att. iii. 254-260). Those of two of the Thesmothetae are missing, but no doubt stood in the front row with the others.

<sup>3</sup> Aristoph. Equit. 573-576; Theophrast. Char. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Aeschin. Fals. Leg. § 111, Ctesiph. § 76; Dem. de Cor. § 28; Corp. Ins. Att. ii. 164; Cic. de Senect. § 63; Val. Max. iii. 5.

<sup>5</sup> See chap. i. p. 49.

family, descending by succession to the eldest male representative. An honour of this kind was bestowed upon Demosthenes<sup>1</sup>.

With the exception of the reserved places in the front rows, the rest of the auditorium consisted of the ordinary two-obol seats. Concerning the arrangements adopted in this part of the theatre a few details have been recorded. It appears that special portions of the auditorium were set apart for the different classes of the community. There was a particular place for the members of the Council of Five Hundred, and another place for the Ephebi, or youths between the age of eighteen and twenty<sup>2</sup>. The women were separated from the men, and the courtesans sat apart from the other women<sup>3</sup>. It is probable that all the women sat at the back of the theatre, at a long distance from the stage. Foreigners also seem usually to have been confined to the back seats<sup>4</sup>. The amphitheatre of seats was divided into thirteen blocks by the passages which ran upwards from the orchestra. It is a very plausible conjecture that in the arrangement of the audience each tribe had a special block assigned to it. Not that there was any correspondence between the number of the blocks and the number of the tribes. The blocks of seats were thirteen from the first: the tribes were originally ten, and were only raised in later times to twelve and thirteen. If therefore particular blocks were really appropriated to particular tribes, there must have been from one to three blocks unappropriated during a considerable period of Athenian history. But the excavations in the theatre afford grounds for inferring that there was a connexion between certain blocks and certain tribes, and the thing is not improbable in itself<sup>5</sup>. The tribal divisions

<sup>1</sup> Aeschin. Ctesiph. § 154; Plut. X Orat., psephisms I and II, p. 851 A-F.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Av. 795; Poll. iv. 122 βουλευτικὸν μέρος τοῦ θεάτρου καὶ ἐφηβικόν.

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Aristoph. Eccles. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Aristoph. Pax 962-966 καὶ τοῖς θεαταῖς ῥάπτε τῶν κριθῶν. Οἱ ἰδοῦ. | TP. ἔδωκας ἥδη; Οἱ. νῆ τὸν Ἑρμῆν, ὥστε γε | . . . οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεὶς ὅστις οὐ κριθὴν ἔχει. | TP. οὐαί γυναῖκες γ' ἔλαβον. Alexis, Γυναικοκρατία, fr. 1

(Meineke, Frag. Com. Gr. iii. p. 402) ἐνταῦθα περὶ τὴν ἐσχάτην δεῖ κερκίδα ὑμᾶς καθίζουσας θεωρεῖν ὡς ξένας.

<sup>5</sup> In the central block, on the third step, was a statue of Hadrian, of which the basis is still preserved, erected in 112 A. D. by the Areopagus, the Council of Six Hundred, and the people of Athens (C. I. A. ii. 464). Besides this, the bases of three other statues of Hadrian, erected by different tribes, are still in existence. They are all on the

played a large part in the various details of Attic administration, and an arrangement by tribes would have greatly facilitated the process of distributing the enormous mass of spectators among their proper seats.

Before leaving this part of the subject it may be useful to give a complete list of the priests and officials for whom the front row was reserved in later times. It is still possible, as already stated, to determine the occupants of sixty out of the sixty-seven seats; and the arrangement, with a few exceptions, is that of Hadrian's time<sup>1</sup>. The list of names is not without interest, as it enables us, better than any description, to form a general conception of the sort of arrangement which was probably adopted at an earlier period. It also affords a curious glimpse into the religious side of the old Athenian life, and helps us to realise the variety and multiplicity of priests, deities, and ceremonials. In the very centre of the front row, in the best place in the whole theatre, sat the priest of Dionysus Eleuthereus, on a throne of elaborate workmanship. A representation of the throne (Fig. 35) is inserted on the next page<sup>2</sup>.

second step. The first, erected by the tribe Erechtheis, is in the first block from the eastern end; the second, erected by the tribe Acamanthis, is in the sixth block from the eastern end; the third, erected by the tribe Oeneis, is in the sixth block from the western end (C.I.A. iii. 466-468). Thus the place of each statue in the series of blocks corresponded exactly with the place of the tribe in the official list of tribes. It is therefore a highly plausible conjecture that, in addition to the statue of Hadrian in the central block, there were twelve other statues erected by the twelve tribes in the remaining blocks; and that each tribe had a special block appropriated to itself. See Benndorf, *Beiträge zur Kenntniss des att. Theaters* p. 4 ff.

<sup>1</sup> Fourteen of the thrones were out of place when the theatre was first excavated (see p. 124). The position of some of them is rather conjectural. In the list given in the text Dörpfeld's

arrangement has been followed (Griech. Theater, p. 47). For the inscriptions see Corp. Ins. Att. iii. 240-302. There is a very full account of the inscriptions on the thrones in Wheeler's article on the Theatre of Dionysus, in *Papers of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, vol. i. p. 152 ff.

<sup>2</sup> The illustration is taken from *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, vol. xiii. p. 196. On the back of the chair are depicted two Satyrs, holding a bunch of grapes. In the front, underneath the seat, are two Oriental figures, engaged in a fight with winged lions. On the arms of the throne are figures of Cupids, setting cocks to fight. The appropriateness of the Satyrs, as a decoration in the theatre of Dionysus, is obvious. The cocks, no doubt, refer to the annual cock-fight held in the theatre (see above, chap. iii. p. 202). The significance of the Oriental figures has not yet been explained.

As the theatre was regarded as a temple of Dionysus, and the drama was a celebration in his honour, it was only fitting that his priest should occupy the most conspicuous and distinguished

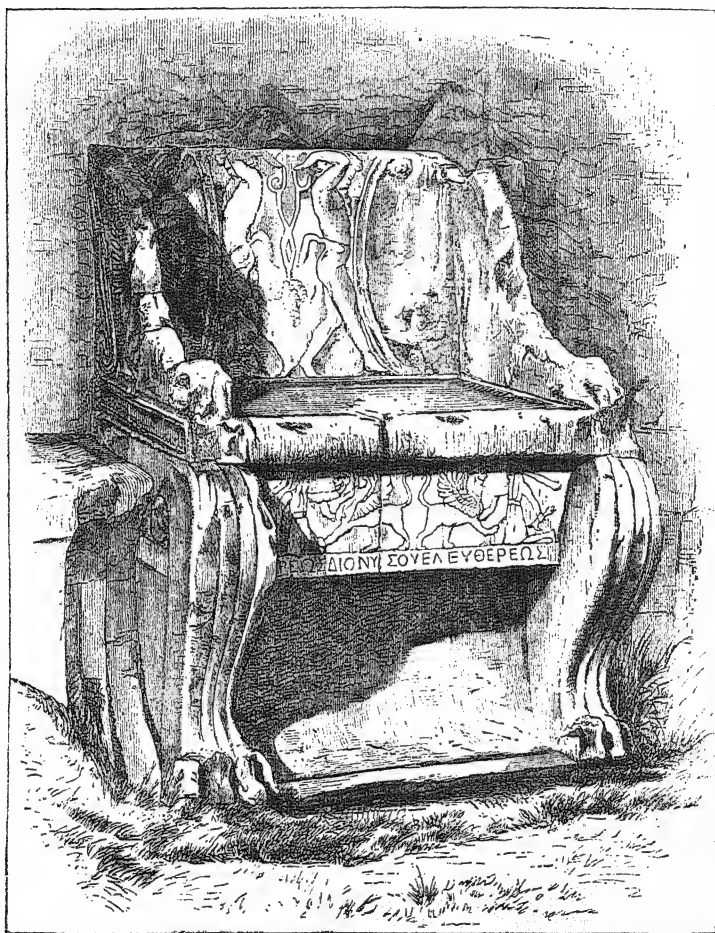


FIG. 35.

position. There is a reference to the arrangement in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, in the scene where Dionysus is terrified by the goblins of Hades, and desperately appeals to his own priest

for protection<sup>1</sup>. Of the thirty-three seats to the left of the priest of Dionysus the occupants of twenty-six are still known, and were as follows:—

Priest of Zeus the Protector of the City.  
 The Sacrificer.  
 The Torch-bearer.  
 Priest of Pythian Apollo.  
 The Hieromnemon<sup>2</sup>.  
 Priest and Chief Priest of Augustus Caesar.  
 Priest of Hadrian Eleuthereus.  
 King Archon.  
 Chief Archon.  
 Polemarch.  
 The General.  
 The Herald.  
 Thesmothetes.  
 Thesmothetes.  
 Thesmothetes.  
 Thesmothetes.  
 The Sacred Herald.  
 . . . . . and Apollo:  
 Diogenes the Benefactor<sup>3</sup>.  
 Priest of Attalus Eponymus:  
 The Iacchus-carrier<sup>4</sup>.  
 Priest of Asclepius the Healer.  
 Fire-bringer from the Acropolis<sup>5</sup>.  
 Priest of the People, the Graces; and Rome.  
 Holy Herald and Priest.  
 Priest of Apollo of Zoster.

All the thrones to the right hand of the priest of Dionysus have been preserved, and were occupied by the following persons:—

Interpreter appointed by the Pythian Oracle<sup>6</sup>.  
 Priest of Olympian Zeus.  
 Hierophant.  
 Priest of Delian Apollo.

<sup>1</sup> Aristoph. Ran. 297.

<sup>2</sup> i. e. the representative of Athens at the Amphictyonic Council.

<sup>3</sup> A Macedonian commander of the third century, who restored Athens to freedom after the death of Demetrius.

<sup>4</sup> i. e. the priest who carried the Iacchus, or sacred statue of Dionysus, at the Eleusinian procession.

<sup>5</sup> i. e. the priest who looked after the sacrificial fire in the temple of Athene on the Acropolis.

<sup>6</sup> He was one of the three Exegetae, or Interpreters of sacred law, and was appointed by the Pythian oracle. A second was chosen by the people from the Eupatridae, and also had a seat in the front row.

Priest of Poseidon the Nourisher.  
 Priest of the Graces, and of Fire-bearing Artemis of the Tower.  
 Interpreter chosen from the Eupatridae by the people for life.  
 Priest of Poseidon the Earth-holder and Poseidon Erectheus.  
 Priest of Artemis Colaenis.  
 Priest of Dionysus the Singer, chosen from the Euneidae.  
 Bullock-keeper of Palladian Zeus.  
 Priest of Zeus of the Council and Athene of the Council<sup>1</sup>.  
 Priest of Zeus the Deliverer and Athene the Deliverer.  
 Priest of Antinous the Dancer, chosen from the Company of Actors<sup>2</sup>.  
 Priest of Apollo Patrôus.  
 Priest of Dionysus the Singer, chosen from the Company of Actors.  
 Priest of Glory and Order.  
 Priest of Asclepius.  
 Priest of the Muses.  
 Priest of Zeus the god of Friendship.  
 Priest of the Twelve Gods.  
 Statue-cleanser of Zeus at Pisa.  
 Priest of the Lycean Apollo.  
 Statue-cleanser of Olympian Zeus in the City.  
 Priest of the Dioscuri and the Hero Epitēgius<sup>3</sup>.  
 Priest of Heavenly Nemesis.  
 Priest of Hephaestus.  
 Priest of Apollo the Laurel-wearer.  
 Priest of Dionysus of Aulon.  
 The Stone-carrier<sup>4</sup>.  
 Priest of Theseus.  
 Bullock-keeper of Zeus the Accomplisher.  
 Priest of Demeter and Persephone.

The priests enumerated here were the principal dignitaries in the Athenian hierarchy. Behind them sat a large gathering of inferior priests and priestesses. Their presence in such numbers at performances like the Old and Middle Comedy affords a curious illustration of the religious sentiment of the Athenians, and indicates clearly that the coarseness of the early comedy, and its burlesque representations of the gods and their adventures, did not constitute any offence against religion, but formed an appropriate element in the worship of Dionysus.

<sup>1</sup> They were the guardians of the βουλή, and their altars were in the βουλευτήριον.

<sup>2</sup> This Antinous was a favourite of Hadrian's, and was drowned in the

Nile, and afterwards deified.

<sup>3</sup> Unknown.

<sup>4</sup> Probably an official who carried a sacred stone in some procession; but nothing is known about him.



§ 4. *Various Arrangements in connexion with the Audience.*

The performance of plays began soon after sunrise, and continued all day long without intermission. There was no such thing as an interval for refreshments; one play followed another in rapid succession<sup>1</sup>. Apart from direct evidence upon the subject, it is manifest that, considering the large number of plays which had to be gone through in the time, any delay would have been out of the question. Consequently the spectators were careful to have a good meal before starting for the theatre<sup>2</sup>. There was also a plentiful consumption of wine and various light refreshments in the course of the actual performances. The time for such an indulgence was during the tedious portions of a play, but when one of the great actors came upon the stage the provisions were laid aside, and the audience became all attention<sup>3</sup>.

The theatre must have presented a bright and festive appearance. Crowns were worn in honour of Dionysus by the express command of the oracle<sup>4</sup>. The gaily-coloured dresses of the spectators would add greatly to the brilliancy of the scene. At the same time the comfort of the audience was not very much consulted. The seats were of wood, or in later times of stone, and had no backs; the people had to sit there all day long, packed together as closely as was possible. Many men brought cushions and carpets with them. Aeschines draws a contemptuous picture of Demosthenes escorting Philip's ambassadors to the theatre in person, and arranging their cushions and spreading their carpets with his own hands. The toady

<sup>1</sup> Aeschin. Ctesiph. § 76 ἅμα τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἡγεῖτο τοῖς πρέσβεσιν εἰς τὸ θέατρον. Dem. Meid. § 74 ἐγὼ δ' ὑπ' ἐχθροῦ νήφοντος, ἔωθεν, κ.τ.λ. Aristoph. Av. 786-789 αὐτίχ' ὑμῶν τῶν θεατῶν εἴ τις ἦν ὑπόπτερος, | εἶτα πεινῶν τοῖς χοροῖσι τῶν τραγῳδῶν ἤχθετο, | ἐκπτόμενος ἄν οὗτος ἡρίστησεν ἐλθὼν οἴκαδε, | κατ' ἄν ἐμπλησθεῖς ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἀδῖς αὐ κατέπτατο.

<sup>2</sup> Philochorus ap. Athen. p. 464 E Ἀθηναῖοι τοῖς Διονυσιακοῖς ἀγῶσι τὸ μὲν

πρῶτον ἡρισθηκότες καὶ πεπωκότες ἐβᾶδιζον ἐπὶ τὴν θέαν.

<sup>3</sup> Philochor. ap. Athen. l.c. παρὰ δὲ τὸν ἀγῶνα πάντα οἶνος αὐτοῖς ἀνοχοεῖτο καὶ τραγῆματα παρεφέρετο. Aristot. Eth. Nic. x. 5 καὶ ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις οἱ τραγηματίζοντες, ὅταν φαῖλοι οἱ ἀγωνιζόμενοι ὦσι, τότε μάλιστ' αὐτὸ δρῶσιν.

<sup>4</sup> Philochor. ap. Athen. l.c. καὶ ἐστεφανωμένοι ἐθεώρουν. Dem. Meid. § 52.

in Theophrastus, when he accompanies a wealthy man to the theatre, is careful to take the cushion out of the slave's hands, and to insist upon placing it ready for his patron<sup>1</sup>. There was no shelter from the sun. The theatre faced towards the south, and was entirely uncovered. But as the dramatic performances took place at the end of the winter, or early in the spring, the heat would not usually be excessive. Probably the sun was in many cases very welcome. If, however, any shelter was required, hats appear to have been worn, though the Athenians generally went bare-headed except upon a journey<sup>2</sup>. It has been suggested that small awnings were sometimes erected upon rods by individual spectators for their own convenience, and that the 'purple cloths' which Demosthenes spread out for Philip's ambassadors were awnings of this description<sup>3</sup>. It is true that an awning was provided for the priest of Dionysus, as the chief dignitary of the meeting. But it is improbable that the same convenience was extended to any other members of the audience, at any rate in the period of the democracy. In Roman times awnings were erected for the front rows of spectators; but this was a late innovation<sup>4</sup>.

To keep order among a gathering of about twenty thousand persons, crowded together in a comparatively small space, must have been a matter of some difficulty. Certain officers called 'staff-bearers' were stationed in the theatre for the purpose<sup>5</sup>. Superintendents were also appointed to maintain discipline among the numerous chorus-singers<sup>6</sup>. Disturbances were not infrequent, and arose from various causes. Sometimes the rivalry between two choregi resulted in actual violence. For example, on one occasion, when Taureas and Alcibiades were competitors in a dithyrambic contest, a fight broke out between them, in the course of which Alcibiades, being the stronger

<sup>1</sup> Aeschin. Ctesiph. § 76, Fals. Leg. § 111; Theophrast. Char. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Suidas v. Δράκων· ὑπὸ τῶν Αἰγυνῶν ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ, ἐπιρραψάντων αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν πετάσους πλείονας καὶ χιτῶνας καὶ ἱμάτια, ἀπεννίγη.

<sup>3</sup> The φοινικίδες mentioned by Aeschines (Ctesiph. § 76) were probably

coverlets or carpets.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 129.

<sup>5</sup> Called βαβδόφοροι (Schol. Aristoph. Pax 734), and βαβδόχοι (Pax 734).

<sup>6</sup> Suid. ἐπιμελητῆαι, ἐχειροτονοῦντο τῶν χορῶν, ὡς μὴ ἀτακτεῖν τοὺς χορευτὰς ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις.

man of the two, drove Taureas out of the orchestra<sup>1</sup>. That the feeling between the choregi often ran very high has already been pointed out in a previous chapter. Disputes about seats were another fertile source of disturbance. With the exception of the front row, the individual places were not separated from one another, but the people sat together on the long benches. Such an arrangement was very likely to cause confusion. Demosthenes mentions the case of a highly distinguished citizen, who ran great risk of being put to death, owing to his having forcibly ejected a man from his seat. Personal violence in the theatre was regarded as a crime against religion, and was strictly prohibited. If any dispute arose, the proper course was to appeal to the officers; and the man who took the law into his own hands was guilty of a capital offence<sup>2</sup>.

### § 5. *Character of Attic Audiences.*

The Athenians were a lively audience, and gave expression to their feelings in the most unmistakable manner. The noise and uproar produced by an excited crowd of twenty thousand persons must have been of a deafening character, and is described in the most uncomplimentary language by Plato<sup>3</sup>. It was exceedingly difficult for the judges to resist such demonstrations, and to vote in accordance with their own private judgment. The ordinary modes of signifying pleasure or disgust were much the same in ancient as in modern times, and consisted of hisses and groans on the one hand, and shouts and clapping of hands on the other<sup>4</sup>. The Athenians had also a peculiar way of marking their disapproval of a performance by kicking with the heels of their sandals against the front of the stone benches on which they were sitting<sup>5</sup>. Stones were occasionally thrown by an irate audience. Aeschines was hissed off the stage, and 'almost stoned to death,' in the course of his

<sup>1</sup> Andocid. Alcibiad. § 20.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. Meid. §§ 178, 179.

<sup>3</sup> Plat. Legg. 700 C.

<sup>4</sup> Dem. Meid. §§ 14, 226; Alciphron, Epist. iii. 71.

<sup>5</sup> Poll. iv. 122 τὸ μέντοι τὰ ἐδάλια ταῖς πτέρναις κατακροῦνεν πτερνοκοπεῖν ἔλεγον· ἐποιοῦν δὲ τοῦτο ὅποτε τινὰ ἐκβάλλουν.

theatrical career. There is an allusion to the practice in the story of the second-rate musician, who borrowed a supply of stone from a friend in order to build a house, and promised to repay him with the stones he collected from his next performance in public<sup>1</sup>. Country audiences in the Attic demes used figs and olives, and similar missiles, for pelting unpopular actors<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, encores were not unknown, if particular passages took the fancy of the audience. Socrates is said to have encored the first three lines of the *Orestes* of Euripides<sup>3</sup>.

If the Athenians were dissatisfied with an actor or a play, they had no hesitation about revealing the fact, but promptly put a stop to the performance by means of hisses and groans and stamping with the heels. They were able to do so with greater readiness, as several plays were always performed in succession, and they could call for the next play, without bringing the entertainment to a close. In this way they sometimes got through the programme very rapidly. There is an instance of such an occurrence in the story of the comic actor Hermon, whose play should naturally have come on late in the day; but, as all the previous performers were promptly hissed off the stage one after another, he was called upon much sooner than he expected, and in consequence was not ready to appear<sup>4</sup>. If the tale about the comic poet Diphilus is true, it would seem that even the authors of very unsuccessful plays were sometimes forcibly ejected from the theatre<sup>5</sup>.

A few scattered notices and descriptions, referring to the spectators in the Athenian theatre, show that human nature was very much the same in ancient times as at the present day. Certain types of character, which were generally to be met with among an Attic audience, will easily be recognised

<sup>1</sup> Dem. Fals. Leg. § 337; Athen. p. 245 E.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. de Cor. § 262.

<sup>3</sup> Cic. Tusc. iv. § 63. *Αἶθρις* seems to have been the word used; cp. Xen. Symp. ix. 4 ἄμα δὲ ἐβόων αἰθρις.

<sup>4</sup> Poll. iv. 88. The word for hissing an actor off the stage was ἐκβάλλειν; to be hissed off was ἐκκίπτειν. See Dem. de Cor. § 265, Poll. iv. 122.

<sup>5</sup> Athen. p. 583 F.

as familiar figures. There was the man of taste, who prided himself upon his superior discernment, and used to hiss when everyone else was applauding, and clap when everyone else was silent<sup>1</sup>. There was the person who made himself objectionable to his neighbours by whistling an accompaniment to tunes which happened to please him<sup>2</sup>. There were the 'young men of the town,' who took a malign pleasure in hissing a play off the stage<sup>3</sup>. There were the people who brought out their provisions during the less exciting parts of the entertainment<sup>4</sup>. There was the somnolent individual who slept peacefully through tragedies and comedies, and was not even waked up by the noise of the audience going away<sup>5</sup>. Certain indications show that the employment of the *claque* was not unknown to Greek actors and poets. The parasite Philaporus, who had recently taken up the profession of an actor, and was anxious about the result of his first public appearance, writes to a friend to ask him to come with a large body of supporters, and drown with their applause the hisses of the critical part of the audience. Philemon, in spite of his inferior talents as a comic writer, is said to have frequently won victories from Menander by practices of this kind<sup>6</sup>.

The character of the Athenian audience as a whole is well exemplified by the stories of their treatment of individual poets. Although they were willing to tolerate the utmost ribaldry upon the stage, and to allow the gods and sacred legends to be burlesqued in the most ridiculous fashion, they were at the same time extremely orthodox in regard to the national religion. Any atheistical sentiments, and any violations of their religious law, were liable to provoke an outburst of the greatest violence. Aeschylus on one occasion was nearly killed in the theatre itself, because he was supposed to have revealed part of the mysteries in the course of a tragedy. He was only saved by flying for refuge to the altar

<sup>1</sup> Theophrast. Char. II.

<sup>2</sup> Theophrast. Char. I. c.

<sup>3</sup> Alciphron, Epist. iii. 71 ἵνα, κἂν τι λάθωμεν ἀποσφαλέντες, μὴ λάβῃ χώραν τὰ ἀστικά μεϊράκια κλώσιν ἢ συρίττειν.

<sup>4</sup> Aristot. Eth. Nic. x. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Theophrast. Char. I. c.

<sup>6</sup> Alciphron, Epist. iii. 71; Aul. Gell. N. A. xvii. 4.

of Dionysus in the orchestra<sup>1</sup>. Euripides also caused a great uproar by beginning his *Melanippe* with the line, 'Zeus, whoever Zeus be, for I know not save by report,' &c. In a subsequent production of a revised version of the play he altered the line to 'Zeus, as is reported by truth,<sup>2</sup>' &c. In the same way sentiments which violated the moral feeling of the audience were received with intense indignation, and sometimes resulted in the stoppage of the play. The Danaë of Euripides is said to have been nearly hissed off the stage because of a passage in praise of money<sup>3</sup>. On the other hand, wise and noble sentiments excited great enthusiasm. Aristophanes was rewarded with a chaplet from the sacred olive because of the splendid passage in which he counsels mercy to the disfranchised citizens. Sophocles is said to have been appointed one of the generals in the Samian expedition on account of the excellent political wisdom shown in certain passages of the *Antigone*<sup>4</sup>. The partiality of the Athenians for idealism in art is shown by the reception which they gave to Phrynichus' tragedy of the Capture of Miletus, an historical drama in which the misfortunes of the Iorians were forcibly portrayed. So far from admiring the skill of the poet, they fined him a thousand drachmas for reminding them of the miseries of their kinsfolk, and passed a law forbidding the reproduction of this particular play<sup>5</sup>.

The enthusiasm of the Athenians for the drama was unbounded. Nowhere was the theatre more crowded. In the words of one of the old historians they 'spent the public revenues on their festivals, were more familiar with the stage than with the camp, and paid more regard to verse-makers than to generals<sup>6</sup>.' The speeches of Demosthenes are full of complaints in the same strain. The eagerness with which dramatic victories were coveted, and the elaborate monuments

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. *Eth. Nic.* iii. 2, and Eustath. ad loc.

<sup>2</sup> Plut. *Amator.* 756 C; Nauck, *Trag.* Gr. *Frag.* p. 511.

<sup>3</sup> Senec. *Epist.* 115; Nauck, *Trag.* Gr. *Frag.* p. 457.

<sup>4</sup> Vit. Aristoph. (Dindf. *Prolegom.* de Com. p. 12); Arg. to Soph. *Antig.*

<sup>5</sup> Herod. vi. 21.

<sup>6</sup> Justin. 17. 9. The passage was very likely from Theopompus.

erected to commemorate them, have already been referred to in a previous chapter. It was not however till the middle of the fourth century that the devotion to this and similar amusements grew to such a height as to become a positive vice, and to sap the military energies of the people. The Athenians of the fifth century showed that enthusiasm for art and music and the drama was not inconsistent with energy of character. As a matter of fact the very greatest period of the Attic drama is also the period of the political supremacy of Athens.

As far as intelligence and discrimination are concerned, the Athenian audiences were probably superior to any audience of the same size which has ever been brought together. Their keen and rapid intellect was a subject of frequent praise among the ancients, and was ascribed to the exhilarating influence of the Attic climate<sup>1</sup>. They were especially distinguished for the refinement of their taste in matters of art and literature, and for the soberness of judgment with which they rejected any sort of florid exuberance. That they were keenly alive to the attractions of beauty of form and chastened simplicity of style is proved by the fact that Sophocles was by far the most successful of their tragic poets. Though Euripides became more popular among the later Greeks, Sophocles in his own lifetime obtained far more victories than any other tragic writer<sup>2</sup>. At the same time it is easy to form an exaggerated idea of the refinement of an Attic audience. They were drawn from all classes of the people, and a large proportion were ignorant and uncultured. Plato speaks in the most disparaging terms of them, and charges them with having corrupted the dramatic poets, and brought them down to their own level<sup>3</sup>. His evidence is perhaps rather prejudiced. But Aristotle, who had much greater faith in popular judgment, is not very complimentary. He divides the theatrical audience

<sup>1</sup> Dem. Olynth. iii. § 15 *καὶ γὰρ ὅταν πάντων ὑμεῖς δέξεται τὰ ῥηθέντα*. Cic. de Fato § 7 'Athenis tenue caelum, ex quo acutiores etiam putantur Attici.'

<sup>2</sup> Cic. Orat. § 25 '(Athenienses) quorum semper fuit prudens sincerumque

iudicium, nihil ut possent nisi incorruptum audire et elegans;' § 27 'ad Atticorum igitur aures teretes et religiosas qui se accommodant, ii sunt existimandi Attice dicere.'

<sup>3</sup> Plat. Legg. 659 B, C.

into two classes, the refined and cultured class on the one hand, and the mass of rough and ignorant artisans on the other. One of his objections to the profession of an actor or musician is that he must accommodate himself to the level of the ignorant part of his audience<sup>1</sup>. He mentions examples in the Poetics of the low level of popular taste, from which it appears that the average spectator in ancient times was, like his modern counterpart, fond of 'happy terminations.' He cared little for the artistic requirements of the composition; his desire was to see virtue rewarded, and vice punished, at the end of a play. Then again, a large part of the audience, Aristotle remarks, were so ignorant as to be unacquainted with the ordinary facts of mythology, which formed the basis of most tragedies. In judging a play, they paid more regard to the actor's voice than to the poet's genius<sup>2</sup>. At the same time, in spite of depreciatory criticisms, it must be remembered that the true criterion of a people's taste is to be found in the character of the popular favourites. The victorious career of Sophocles, lasting over more than fifty years, is a convincing proof of the fact that, at any rate during the fifth century, the dramatic taste of the Athenians was altogether higher than that of an ordinary popular audience.

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. Pol. viii. 7 ἐπεὶ δ' ὁ θεατῆς διττός, ὁ μὲν ἐλεύθερος καὶ πεπαιδευμένος, ὁ δὲ φορτικὸς ἐκ βαναύσων καὶ θητῶν καὶ ἄλλων τοιούτων συγκείμενος. Ibid. 6 ὁ γὰρ θεατῆς φορτικὸς ὅν μεταβάλλειν εἴωθε τὴν μουσικὴν, ὥστε καὶ τοὺς τεχνίτας τοὺς πρὸς αὐτὸν μελετῶντας αὐτοὺς τε ποιοῦς τινὰς ποιεῖ.

<sup>2</sup> Aristot. Poet. c. 13 δευτέρα δ' ἡ πρώτη λεγομένη ὑπὸ τινῶν ἐστὶ σύστασις,

ἡ διπλὴν τε τὴν σύστασιν ἔχουσα καθάπερ ἡ Ὀδύσσεια καὶ τελευτῶσα ἐξ ἐναντίας τοῖς βελτίοσι καὶ χειρόσιν. δοκεῖ δὲ εἶναι πρώτη διὰ τὴν τῶν θεάτρων ἀσθένειαν, ἀκολουθοῦσι γὰρ οἱ ποιηταὶ κατ' εὐχὴν ποιῶντες τοῖς θεαταῖς. Ibid. c. 9 (of the old legends) ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰ γνῶριμα ὀλίγοις γνῶριμά ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ὅμως εὐφραίνει πάντας. Id. Rhet. iii. 1 ἐκεῖ μείζον δύνανται νῦν τῶν ποιητῶν οἱ ὑποκριταί.



## APPENDIX A

THE information concerning the dates at which the plays of the great Attic dramatists were produced, and the success which they met with in the competitions, is derived from various brief notices, which occur mostly in the Arguments prefixed to the different plays, and which were ultimately derived from Aristotle's *Didascaliae*, or from other collections of the same kind (see chap. i. p. 65). A list of these notices is here appended:—

472 B.C.

Arg. Aesch. *Persae*: 'Επὶ Μένωνος τραγῳδῶν Αἰσχύλος ἐνίκα Φινεΐ, Πέρσαις, Γλαύκῳ, Προβηθεί.

467 B.C.

Arg. Aesch. *Septem*: 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ Θεαγενίδου Ὀλυμπιάδι οἷ'. ἐνίκα Λαΐῳ, Οἰδίποδι, Ἑπτὰ ἐπὶ Θήβας, Σφίγγι σατυρικῇ. δεύτερος Ἀριστίας Περσεΐ, Ταντάλῳ, Παλαισταῖς σατυρικοῖς τοῖς Πρατίνου πατρός. τρίτος Πολυφράδμων Λυκούργεια τετραλογία.

458 B.C.

Arg. Aesch. *Agamemnon*: 'Εδιδάχθη τὸ δράμα ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Φιλοκλέους, Ὀλυμπιάδι ὀγδοηκοστῇ ἔτει δευτέρῳ. πρῶτος Αἰσχύλος Ἀγαμέμνονι, Χοηφόροις, Εὐμενίσιν, Πρωτέϊ σατυρικῷ. ἐχορήγει Ξενοκλῆς Ἀφιδνεύς.

455 B.C.

Vit. Eurip. p. 4 Dindf.: "Ἡρξασθαι δὲ διδάσκειν (δ' Εὐριπίδης) ἐπὶ Καλλίου ἄρχοντος κατ' Ὀλυμπιάδα πᾶ' ἔτει α', πρῶτον δ' ἐδίδαξε τὰς Πελοπιδάς, ὅτε καὶ τρίτος ἐγένετο.

450 B.C. (?)

Arg. Eur. *Rhesus*: 'Ἐν μέντοι ταῖς διδασκαλίαις ὡς γνήσιον ἀναγράφεται. Schol. Rhes. 529: Κράτης ἀγνοεῖν φησι τὸν Εὐριπίδην τὴν περὶ τὰ μετέωρα θεωρίαν διὰ τὸ νέον εἶναι ὅτε τὸν Ῥῆσον ἐδίδασκε.

438 B.C.

Arg. Eur. Alcestis : 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ Γλαυκίνου ἄρχοντος Ὀλυμπιάδι πέ'.  
πρῶτος ἦν Σοφοκλῆς, δεύτερος Εὐριπίδης Κρήσσαις, 'Αλκμαίωνι τῷ διὰ Ψωφίδος,  
Τηλέφῳ, 'Αλκίστιδι.

431 B.C.

Arg. Eur. Medea : 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ Πυθοδώρου ἄρχοντος κατὰ τὴν ὀγδοη-  
κοστὴν ἐβδόμην Ὀλυμπιάδα. πρῶτος Εὐφορίων, δεύτερος Σοφοκλῆς, τρίτος  
Εὐριπίδης Μηδεία, Φιλοκτήτῃ, Δίκτυϊ, Θερισταῖς σατύροις. οὐ σώζεται.

430 B.C. (?)

Aristid. vol. ii. p. 334 Dindf. : Σοφοκλῆς Φιλοκλέους ἡττάτο ἐν 'Αθηναίοις  
τὸν Οἰδίπου, ὃ Ζεὺ καὶ θεοί.

428 B.C.

Arg. Eur. Hippolytus : 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ 'Αμείνωνος ἄρχοντος Ὀλυμπιάδι ὀγδοη-  
κοστῇ ἐβδόμῃ, ἔτει τετάρτῳ. πρῶτος Εὐριπίδης, δεύτερος 'Ιοφῶν, τρίτος 'Ιων.

425 B.C.

Arg. Arist. Acharnenses : 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ Εὐθύνου ἄρχοντος ἐν Ἀθηναίοις διὰ  
Καλλιστράτου καὶ πρῶτος ἦν. δεύτερος Κρατῖνος Χειμαζόμενοις· οὐ σώζονται.  
τρίτος Εὐπολὶς Νουμηνίαις.

424 B.C.

Arg. Arist. Equites : 'Εδιδάχθη τὸ δράμα ἐπὶ Στρατοκλέους ἄρχοντος  
δημοσίᾳ εἰς Ἀθήναια, δι' αὐτοῦ τοῦ 'Αριστοφάνους. πρῶτος ἐνίκα· δεύτερος  
Κρατῖνος Σατύροις· τρίτος 'Αριστομένης 'Υλοφόροις.

423 B.C.

Arg. Arist. Nubes : Αἱ πρῶται Νεφέλαι ἐν ἄστει ἐδιδάχθησαν ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος  
'Ισάρχου, ὅτε Κρατῖνος μὲν ἐνίκα Πυτίνῃ, 'Αμειψίας δὲ Κόννῳ.

422 B.C.

Arg. Arist. Nubes : Αἱ δὲ δεύτεραι Νεφέλαι ἐπὶ 'Αμεινίου ἄρχοντος. Arg.  
Arist. Vespae : 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος 'Αμεινίου διὰ Φιλωνίδου εἰς Ἀθήναια  
καὶ ἐνίκα πρῶτος. δεύτερος ἦν Φιλωνίδης Προάγωνι, Λεύκων Πρέσβεσι τρίτος.

421 B.C.

Arg. Arist. Pax : 'Ενίκησε δὲ τῷ δράματι ὁ ποιητὴς ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος 'Αλκαίου,  
ἐν ἄστει. πρῶτος Εὐπολὶς Κέλαξι, δεύτερος 'Αριστοφάνης Εἰρήνῃ, τρίτος Λεύκων  
Φράτορσι.

415 B.C.

Ael. Var. Hist. ii. 8 : Κατὰ τὴν πρώτην καὶ ἐνενηκοστὴν Ὀλυμπιάδα . . .  
ἀντηγωνίσαντο ἀλλήλοις Ξενοκλῆς καὶ Εὐριπίδης· καὶ πρῶτός γε ἦν Ξενοκλῆς,  
ὅστις ποτὲ οὗτός ἐστιν, Οἰδίποδι καὶ Λυκάωνι καὶ Βάκχαις καὶ 'Αθάμαντι σατυρικῷ.  
τούτου δεύτερος Εὐριπίδης ἦν 'Αλεξάνδρῳ καὶ Παλαμήδει καὶ Τρῳάσι καὶ Σισύφῳ  
σατυρικῷ.

414 B.C.

Arg. I. Arist. Aves: 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ Χαβρίου διὰ Καλλιστράτου ἐν ἄστει, ὃς ἦν δεύτερος τοῖς Ὀρνισι, πρῶτος Ἀμειψίας Κωμασταῖς, τρίτος Φρύνιχος Μονοτρόπῳ. Arg. II. Arist. Aves: 'Επὶ Χαβρίου . . . εἰς Ἀθήναια τὸν Ἀμφιάραιον ἐδίδαξε διὰ Φιλωνίδου.

412 B.C.

Schol. Arist. Ran. 53: 'Ἡ δὲ Ἀνδρομέδα ὀγδόῳ ἔτει προεισηλθεν. Schol. Arist. Thesm. 1012: συνδεδιδασκται γὰρ τῇ Ἑλένῃ.

411 B.C.

Arg. Arist. Lysistrata: 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ Καλλίου ἄρχοντος τοῦ μετὰ Κλεόκριτον ἄρξαντος. εἰσῆκται δὲ διὰ Καλλιστράτου.

409 B.C.

Arg. Soph. Philoctetes: 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ Γλαυκίππου. πρῶτος ἦν Σοφοκλῆς.

408 B.C.

Schol. Eur. Orest. 371: Πρὸ γὰρ Διοκλέους, ἐφ' οὗ τὸν Ὀρέστην ἐδίδαξε.

409-407 B.C. (?)

Arg. Eur. Phoenissae: 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ Ναυσικράτους (unknown, probably 'suffectus') ἄρχοντος Ὀλυμπίاد . . . . . πρῶτος . . . . . δεύτερος Εὐρυπίδης, τρίτος . . . . . ὁ Οἰνόμαος καὶ Χρῦσιππος καὶ Φοῖνισσαι καὶ . . . σατυρ . . . . . οὐ σώζεται. Schol. Arist. Ran. 53: διὰ τί δὲ μὴ ἄλλο τι τῶν πρὸ ὀλίγου διδαχθέντων καὶ καλῶν, Ὑψιπύλλης, Φοινισσῶν, Ἀντιόπης.

405 B.C.

Arg. Arist. Ranae: 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ Καλλίου τοῦ μετὰ Ἀντιγένῃ διὰ Φιλωνίδου εἰς Ἀθήναια. πρῶτος ἦν Φρύνιχος δεύτερος Μούσαις Πλάτων τρίτος Κλεοφῶντι.

— B.C.

Schol. Arist. Ran. 67: Οὕτω γὰρ καὶ αἱ Διδασκαλίαι φέρουσι, τελευταῖαν σαντος Εὐρυπίδου τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ δεδιδασχέναι ὁμώνυμον ἐν ἄστει Ἰφιγένειαν τὴν ἐν Ἀλλίδι, Ἀλκμαίωνα, Βάκχας.

401 B.C.

Arg. Soph. O. C.: Τὸν ἐπὶ Κολωνῷ Οἰδίποδα ἐπὶ τετελευτηκῷ τῷ πάππῳ Σοφοκλῆς ὁ υἱοῦς ἐδίδαξεν, υἱὸς ὢν Ἀρίστανος, ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Μίκωνος.

388 B.C.

Arg. Arist. Plutus: 'Εδιδάχθη ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Ἀντιπάτρου, ἀνταγωνιζομένου αὐτῷ Νικοχάρους μὲν Λάκωσιν, Ἀριστομένους δὲ Ἀδμήτῳ, Νικοφῶντος δὲ Ἀδῶνιδι, Ἀλκαίου δὲ Πασιφάῃ.

## APPENDIX B

Our knowledge of the Athenian drama has been very much increased in recent years by the discovery at Athens of a large number of inscriptions relating to dramatic contests. A complete collection of all the inscriptions which bear upon this subject will be found, admirably edited by Köhler, in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Atticarum*, ii. 2. p. 394 foll., iv. 2. p. 218 foll. The following selection is copied from Köhler. Lists I–IV are given almost in full. In list V only the best preserved portions have been printed. List VI contains merely a few specimens of the various fragments.

## I. List of victors in the four contests at the City Dionysia.

## I.

... πρῶτον κῶμοι ἦσαν τῶν ...

[Ξε]νοκλείδης ἐχορήγει,

[Μ]άγνης ἐδίδασκεν.

τραγωδῶν,

Περικλῆς Χολαργ(γένης) ἐχορή(γει),

Αἰσχύλος ἐ[δ]ίδασκε[ν].

[κωμωδῶν], \* \* \*

[..... ἐχ]ορήγει,

[..... ἐδιδ]ασκεν.

[τραγωδῶν],

[..... ἐχ]ορήγει,

[..... ω]ν ἐδίδασ(κεν).

[ἐπὶ ..... ο]ν,

[..... ἰς πα]ίδων,

[..... ἐχο]ρήγει.

[..... ἰς ἀνδρ]ῶν,

[..... ἐχο]ρήγ(ει).

[κωμωδῶν],

[..... ἐχορήγ]ει,

\* \* \*

Πανδιονί[ς ἀνδρῶν],

Κλεαίνετ[ος ..... ἐχορήγει].

κωμωδ[ῶν],

Θα[. . . . . ἐχορήγει],

\* \* \* \*

. . . . . ἐχορή(γει),

. . . . . ἐδίδασκεν.

[ἐπὶ Φίλο]κλέους,

458 B. C.

[Οἶ]νῆς παίδων,

Δημόδοκος ἐχορήγει.

Ἴπποθωντὶς ἀνδρῶν,

Εὐκτῆμων Ἐλευ(σίνιος) ἐχορή(γει).

κωμωδῶν,

Εὐρυκλείδης ἐχορήγει,

Εὐφρόνιος ἐδίδασκε.

τραγωδῶν,

Ξενοκλῆς Ἀφιδνα(ῖος) ἐχορή(γει),

Αἰσχύλος ἐδίδασκεν.

ἐπὶ Ἀβρωνος,

457 B. C.

Ἐρεχθίδης παίδων,

Χαρίας Ἀγρυλῆ(θεν) ἐχορ[ήγει].

Λεωντὶς ἀνδρῶν,

Δεινόςτρατος ἐχο[ρήγει].

κωμωδῶν,

[. . . . . ἐχ]ορήγ[ει],

\* \* \* \*

Βίω[ν . . . ἐχορήγει].

κω[μωδῶν],

Ἀνδ[. . . . . ἐχορήγει],

Κα[λ . . . . . ἐδίδασκεν].

τρα[γωδῶν],

Θα[λ . . . . . ἐχορήγει],

Κα[. . . . . ἐδίδασκεν],

ὑπ[υκριτῆς . . . . .].

ἐπ[ὶ . . . . .],

## 2.

[κωμωδῶν],

. . . . . Παια[νιὲς ἐχορήγει],

. . . . . ος ἐδ[ίδασκεν].

[τραγω]ιδῶν,

[. . . . . ω]ν Παιανι[ε]ς ἐχορήγει],

[Με]νεκράτης ἐδ[ίδ]ασκεν],

[ὑπ]οκριτῆς Μυνη[ίσκος].  
 [Ε]πὶ Ἀλκαίου,  
 Ἰπποθωντὶς παίδων,  
 Ἀρίσταρχος Δεκε(λεεὺς) ἐχορή(γει).  
 Αἰαντὶς ἀνδρῶν,  
 Δημοσθένης ἐχορήγει.  
 [κω]μῳδ[ῶν],  
 [. . . . . ἐχορ]ή[γει],

421 B. C.

## 3.

Μένανδρο[s . . . . .] ἐχορήγει,  
 Θεόφιλ[ο]ς ἐδίδασκεν,  
 ὑπο[κριτ]ή[ς] Κλέανδρο[s].  
 Ἐπὶ Θεοδότου,  
 Ἀντιοχίς παίδων,  
 Εὐηγέτης Παλλ[η]νεὺς [ἐχορήγει].  
 Αἰγῆτις ἀνδρῶν,  
 Ἰάσων Κολλυτεὺς ἐχορήγει.

386 B. C.

## 4.

Ἀλεξίς ἐδ[ίδασκεν].  
 τραγῳδῶν,  
 [Κλ]εό[μ]αχος Ἀχα[ρνεὺς] ἐχορήγει,  
 [. . . . . μ]νις ἐ[δίδασκεν],  
 [ὑπο]κριτῆς Θ[ετταλός].  
 [ἐ]πὶ Θεμιστο[κλέους],  
 Ἐρεχθίδης π[αίδων],  
 Διονυσ[. . . . .] ἐχορήγει.

346 B. C.

## 5.

Κεκρο[πίς] παίδων],  
 Διοφάν [. . . ἐχορήγει].  
 Κεκροπίς [ἀνδρῶν],  
 Ὀνήτωρ [Μελιτεὺς] ἐχορήγει].  
 κωμῳδ[ῶν],  
 Διοπεί[θης] . . . . . ἐχορήγει],  
 Προκλε[ίδης] ἐδίδασκεν].  
 τραγῳδ[ῶν],

Latter half  
 of fourth cen-  
 tury B. C.

## 6.

[τραγωδῶν],  
 [. . . . . ἔ]χορή(γει),  
 [. . . . . ἔ]δίδ[ασ]κε,  
 [ὑποκριτῆς Ἀθηνόδω]ρος.  
 [ἐπὶ . . . . . ο]υς,  
 [Αἰγῆς παίδων],  
 [. . . . . Δε]ομ[εεὺς ἐχορ]ή(γει).  
 [Ἰπποθωντῆς ἀνδρῶν],  
 [. . . . . ἐκ Κοίλ]ης ἐχορή(γει).  
 [κωμῳδῶν],

\* \* \* \*

[ἐ]πὶ Ἀριστ[ο]φάνους,  
 Οὐν[ηῖς] παίδων[υ],  
 . . . τος [Ἀχα]ρυν[εὺς ἐχορήγει].  
 [Ἰπ]ποθωντῆς ἀν[δ]ρ[ῶν],  
 . . . ος [Πειρ]αι[εὺς ἐχορήγει].

330 B. C.

## 7.

[. . . . .]νι[. . .] ἐχο(ρήγει),  
 [. . . . .] ἐδίδ[ασ]κεν,  
 [ὑποκριτῆς Θεττα]λός.

\* \* \* \*

. . . . . s Κε . . .

ἐ[χορήγ]ει,  
 Θεόφιλος ἐδίδ[ασκεν].  
 τραγωδῶν,  
 [Θη]ραμένης Κηφισι(εὺς)  
 [ἐχορ]ήγει,  
 [. . . οκ]λῆς ἐδίδασ[κεν],  
 [ὑπο]κριτῆς  
 Ἀθηνόδωρος.

ἐπὶ Κηφισοφῶντος,  
 [Ἰ]ππ[ο]θωντῆς παί[δων],

328 B. C.

## II. Record of tragic contests at the City Dionysia.

[παλαιᾶ]· Νε[οπτόλεμος]  
 [Ἰφίγε]νεία Εὐ[ριπί]δο[υ].  
 [ποη(ταί)]· Ἀστυδάμας

[Ἀχι]λλεί, ὑπε(κρίνετο) Θερταλός·  
 Ἀθάμαντι, ὑπε(κρίνετο) Νεοπτόλ[εμος]·  
 [Ἀν]τιγόνη, ὑπε(κρίνετο) Ἀθηνόδω[ρος]·  
 [Εὐ]άρετος [δεύ(τερος)] Τεύκρω,  
 [ὑπ]ε(κρίνετο) Ἀθηνόδωρος·  
 [Ἀχι]λ[λ]εῖ, [ὑπε(κρίνετο)] Θερταλός·  
 [. . . . . εἰ], ὑ[πε(κρίνετο) Νε]οπτόλεμος·  
 [. . . . . τ]ρί(τος) [Π]ελιάσιν,  
 [ὑπε(κρίνετο) Νεοπ]τόλεμος·  
 Ὀρέστη[ι, ὑπε(κρίνετο) Ἀθη]ν[όδωρος]·  
 Αὔ[ρη], ὑπε(κρίνετο) Θερτ[αλός]·  
 ὑπο(κριτῆς) Νεοπτόλεμος ἐνίκ[α].  
 Ἐπὶ Νικομάχου· σατυρικῶ·

340 B. C.

Τιμοκλῆς Λυκούργω·  
 παλαιᾷ· Νεοπτόλεμ[ος]  
 Ὀρέστη Εὐριπίδου·  
 [π]οη(ταί)· Ἀστυδάμας  
 Παρθενοπαίῳ, ὑπε(κρίνετο) Θερ[ταλός]·  
 [Λυκά]ονι, ὑπε(κρίνετο) Νεοπτόλ[εμος]·  
 . . . . . οκλῆς δεύ(τερος) Φρίξω,  
 [ὑπε(κρίνετο)] Θερταλός·  
 [Οἰδί]ποδι, ὑπε(κρίνετο) Νεοπτόλ[εμος]·  
 [Εὐάρ]ετος τρί(τος)  
 [Ἀλκμ]έ[ον]ι, ὑπε(κρίνετο) Θερτα[λός]·  
 . . . . . η, ὑπε(κρίνετο) Νεοπτό[λεμος]·  
 [ὑπο(κριτῆς) Θε]ρταλός ἐνίκα.  
 [Ἐπὶ Θεο]φράστου· σατυ[ρικῶ]

339 B. C.

. . . . . Φορκίς[ι]·  
 [παλαιᾷ . . . ὁ]στρ[ατος]  
 [. . . . . Εὐ]ριπί[δου]

### III. Record of tragic contests at the Lenaea.

[Π]ειρ[ιθῶς, . . . . .],  
 ὑπε(κρίνετο) . . . . .  
 ὑπο(κριτῆς) [. . . . . ἐνίκα].  
 Ἐπὶ [Ἀστυφίλου . . . . .]  
 Ἀγα[μέμνωνι, . . . . .],  
 ὑπ[ε(κρίνετο) . . . . .]  
 Ἡρα[κλῆς, . . . . .],  
 Θησεῖ, . . . . .,

419 B. C.



ὑπ[ε(κρίνετο) . . . . .]<sup>ο</sup>  
 ὑπο(κριτής) [. . . . . ἐνίκα].  
 Ἐπὶ Ἀρχ[ίου . . . . .] 418 B. C.  
 Τυροῖ, Γ . . . . . ,  
 ὑπε(κρίνετο) Λυσικράτ[ης].  
 Καλλίστρατος . . . . . ,  
 Ἀμφιλόχῳ, Ἰξίω[νι],  
 ὑπε(κρίνετο) Καλλιπιδί[δης].  
 [ὑπ]ο(κριτής) Καλλιπιδί[δης ἐνίκα].  
 [Ἐπ' Ἀ]ντ[ι]φ[ω]ντος Σ . . . . . 417 B. C.  
 . . . . . π . . . . .

## IV. Records of comic contests at the Lenaea.

## I.

[. . . . . τέ(ταρτος) . . . α]στίδι,  
 [ὑπε(κρίνετο) Ἀριστόμ]αχος.  
 [Ἀντιφάνη]ς πέμ(πτος) Ἀνασῶξο(μένοις),  
 [ὑπε(κρίνετο) Ἀντ]ιφάνης.  
 [ὑπο(κριτής) . . . . .]ώνυμος ἐνίκα.  
 [Ἐπὶ Δι]οτίμου Σιμόλος 353 B. C.  
 . . . . . σία, ὑπε(κρίνετο) Ἀριστόμαχος.  
 Διόδωρος δεύ(τερος) Νεκρῶ,  
 ὑπε(κρίνετο) Ἀριστόμαχος.  
 Διόδωρος τρί(τος) Μαινομένω[ι],  
 ὑπε(κρίνετο) Κηφίσιος.  
 [Φοι]νικ[ίδ]ης τέ(ταρτος) Ποητεῖ,  
 [ὑπε(κρίνετο) . . . . .]ης.

## V. Record of comic contests, probably at the City Dionysia.

## I.

[Τιμ]όσ[τρατος] Αντ[ρουμένω], About  
 ὑπε(κρίνετο) Διογείτων 190 B. C.  
 ὑπο(κριτής) Κράτης ἐνίκα.  
 Ἐπὶ Συμμάχου οὐκ ἐγ[ένετο].  
 Ἐπὶ Θεοξένου οὐκ [έγένετο].  
 Ἐπὶ Ζωπύρου [παλαιᾷ].  
 Ἐράτων Με . . . . .  
 ποη(ται) Λαιν . . . . .

## 2.

[Ἐπὶ . . . . . παλαιᾷ].

About  
180 B. C.

. . . . . Μ . . . . .

[ποη(ταί)]. Κρίτων Ἐφεσίοις,

[ὑ]πε(κρίνετο) Σώφιλος·

Παράμονος Ναυαγῶ,

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Ὀνήσιμος·

Τιμόστρατος Φιλοικεῖφ,

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Καλλίστρατος·

Σωγένης Φιλοδεσπότη,

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Ἑκαταῖος·

Φιλήμων νεώ(τερος) Μιλησία,

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Κράτης·

ὑπο(κριτῆς) Ὀνήσιμος ἐνίκ[α].

Ἐπὶ Ἑρμογένου οὐκ [ἐγέ]νετο.

Ἐπὶ Τιμησιάν[ακτος· π]αλαιᾷ·

Φιλόστρατο[ς Ἀποκλε]ιομένει Ποσει[δίππου].

ποη(ταί) . . . . . κλήρω,

ὑπε(κρίνετο) . . . . .

## 3.

About  
170 B. C.

[Παρά]μονος Χορηγούντι,

[ὑπε(κρίνετο)] Μόμιμος·

[ὑ]πο(κριτῆς) Κριτόδημος ἐνίκ[α].

[Ἐ]πὶ Εὐνίκου οὐκ ἐγένε[το].

Ἐπὶ Ξενοκλέους· παλαι[ᾷ].

Μόμιμος Φάσματι Μεν[άνδρου].

ποη(ταί)· Παράμονος τεθνηκώς . . . . . is,

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Δάμων·

Κρίτων Αἰτωλῶ,

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Μόμιμος·

Βίотτος Ποητεῖ,

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Δάμων·

Λάμπυτος . . . . .,

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Κα . . . . .

Ἐπικ[ράτης . . . . .],

ὑπε(κρίνετο) . . . . .

## 4.

About  
165 B. C.

[Ἐπὶ] Εὐερ[γ . . . . . οὐκ ἐγένετο].

[Ἐ]πὶ Ἐραστο[ῦ οὐκ ἐγένετο].

Ἐπὶ Ποσει[δωνίου οὐκ ἐγένετο].

.....

Ἐπὶ Ἀρίσ[τολα] παλαιᾷ.

Ἡρακ.....

## 5.

[ὑπε(κρίνετο) Καβεῖ]ριχος.

[Ἐπ]ιγέ[ν]ης Λυτρουμένω,

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Καβεῖριχος.

ὑπο(κριτής) Νικόλαος ἐνίκα.

Ἐπὶ Ἀνθεστηρίου οὐκ ἐγένε[το].

Ἐπὶ Καλλιστράτου οὐκ ἐγένε[το].

Ἐπὶ Μνησιθέου παλαιᾷ.

Δάμων Φιλαθηναῖο Φιλίππ[ίδου].

πο[ηταῖ]. Φιλοκλῆς Τραυματία,

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Καλλικράτης.

Χαιρίων Αὐτοῦ καταψευδομέ[νω],

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Δάμων.

Τιμόξενος Συγκρύπτον[τι],

ὑπε(κρίνετο) Καλλικράτης.

Ἀγαθοκλῆς Ὀμονοία[ι],

[ὑπε(κρίνετο) Νικόλ]αος.

.....

About

160 B. C.

VI. Lists of tragic and comic poets, and tragic and comic actors, with the number of their victories at the Lenaea and the City Dionysia.

1. Tragic poets, with their victories at the City Dionysia.

## 1.

[Αἰ]σχύ[λος].....

[...]έτης |

[Πολ]υφράσμ[ων]...

[...]ιππος |

[Ξοφο]κλῆς ΔΓ|||

.....τος |...

[Ἀριστῆ]ας...

## 2.

[Καρκί]νος Δ|

Ἀστ]υδάμας Γ[|||]

[Θεο]δέκτας Γ||

[Ἀφα]ρεύς ||

[.....ων] |

## 2. Comic poets, with their victories at the City Dionysia.

## 1.

[Ξε]νόφιλος |

[Τ]ηλεκλείδης Γ

Ἀριστομένης ||

Κρατῖνος |||

Φερεκράτης ||

Ἑρμιππος |||

Φρύνιχος ||

Μυρτίλος |

[Εὔ]πολις |||

## 2.

Τιμο[κ]λῆς |

Προκλείδης |

Μ[έν]ανδρος | . . .

Φ[ιλ]ήμων |||

[Ἀπ]ολλόδωρος[s . . .]

Δίφίλος |||

Φιλιππίδης || . . .

Νικόστρατος . . .

Καλλιάδης |

Ἀμειν[ία]s |

## 3. Tragic actors, with victories at the Lenaea.

Θεόδωρος |||

Ἰππαρχος Γ|

[Ἀ]μεινίας |

[Ἀν]δρυσθένης |

[Νεο]πτόλεμος |

[Θεττα]λός ||

## 4. Comic actors.

[Ἀρίστ]ων |||

Πα[ρ]μένων |

Λύκων ||

Ν[α]υσικ[ράτης . . .]

[Ἀμ]φιχ[άρης . . .].

## APPENDIX C

THE following extracts are from a series of inscriptions containing the accounts of the priests of Apollo at Delos. These priests had charge of the various public buildings in the island, including the theatre. The part of their accounts which refers to the theatre is of great interest, because of the light which it throws on the theatrical architecture of the time. A collection of the notices concerning the theatre is given by Homolle in Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique, 1894, p. 161 foll. The most important passages are given below.

290 B. C. τοῖς τὴν σκηνὴν ἐργολαβήσασι καὶ τὸ προσκήνιον ΗΗΗΗΔ.

282 B. C. Ἑρακλείδῃ εἰς τὸ προσκήνιον γράφοντι πίνακας δύο μισθὸς δραχμαὶ ΙΙΙΙ· Ἀντιδότῳ τοῦ προσκήνιου γρά[ψαν]τε πίνακας δύο . . . . . Θεοδότῳ πίνακα εἰς τὸ προσκήνιον ποιήσαντι μισθὸς δραχμαὶ ΔΔΔ· εἰς τοῦτο κατε[χρήσθη ξύλον] ἐλάτινον τῶν ὑπαρχόντων . . . . ἀπὸ τούτων ἡλεί[ψα]μεν τὰς θύρας πάσας . . . . καὶ ὅσα ἔδει τῆς σκηνῆς τῆς ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ.

281 B. C. τοὺς πίνακας εἰς τὸ θέατρον ἀνενέγκασι ΙΙΙ . . . . . χαλκοῦ εἰς τὴν σκηνὴν μνᾶς ΙΙ.

279 B. C. (δραχμαὶ) ἄς ἐξέτεισε Ἀρίγνωτος Ἀντιπάτρου ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐγγύης ἥς ἡγγύητο Δίατον Ἀπολλοδώρου τῆς τοῦ θεάτρου περιουκοδομίας τὸ καθ' αὐτὸν μέρος . . . . . τορνίσκον εἰς τὸ θέατρον ἐργασαμένῳ Ἀντιγόνῳ Καίκου, παρέχοντι αὐτῷ πάντα εἰς τὸ ἔργον πλήγ ξύλων, μισθὸς . . . . . τοῦ θεάτρου τὴν ὀρχήστραν καὶ τοὺς ὀλκοὺς ἀνακαθάραντι καὶ τὸν χοῦν ἐξενέγκασι μισθωτοῖς, ἀρχιτέκτονος ἐγδόντος, μισθὸς ΙΙΙ . . . . . τῆς σκηνῆς τὸ τέγος καταλείψαντι Ἑρμῶνι ΔΙΙ . . . . . εἰς τὸ [λογε]ῖον τῆς σκηνῆς (ξύλον) . . . .

276 B. C. [ἐργο]λάβαις τοῦ θεάτρου τῶν ὀλκῶν τὴν δευτέραν δόσιν ΧΠ.

274 B. C. [ἀγαγοῦσι εἰς] τὸ θέατρον ἀπὸ τοῦ νεωκορίου λίθους οὐδς εἰργάστατο . . . . . συστήσαντι τὸ παρασκήνιον . . . . . [ἀπενέγκαντι εἰς] τὸ θέατρον λίθους τῶν ἐκ Τήνου δύο καὶ ἐκ τοῦ σταδίου . . . . . ἐγλαβόντι τὴν πρισμὴν τῶν στοῶν τῶν εἰς τὰς σκηνὰς . . . . τῷ τοὺς ἡλοὺς ἐγλαβόντι [τοὺς εἰς τὰς σκ]ηνὰς καὶ τὰ παρασκήνια τῇ μνᾷ ΙΙ ἀπεστηγάμεθα κατὰ τὴν συγγραφὴν μνᾶς τριάκοντα ἐπτὰ μετὰ τοῦ ἀρχιτέκτονος καὶ τῶν ἐπιμελητῶν . . . . . Θεοδῆμῳ τῷ ἐγλαβόντι ποιῆσαι τὴν σκηνὴν τὴν μέσσην καὶ τὰ παρασκήνια τὰ κάτω δραχμῶν ΗΗΗΗΠΔΔΔΔΓΙΙΙΙ . . . . . Ἐπικλύτῳ τῷ ἐγλαβόντι τὰς σκηνὰς τὰς παλαιὰς . . . καὶ ἐπισκευάσαι καὶ τὰς ἐπάνω σκηνὰς καινὰς ποιῆσαι δύο καὶ τὰ παρασκήνια τὰ ἄνω καινὰ ποιῆσαι δύο καὶ τοῖς παλαιοῖς πίναξι τῶν παρασκηνίων περι . . . . . σαι καὶ τὰς ἐξώστρας καὶ τὴν κλίμακα καὶ τοὺς βαθμοὺς

ἐπισκευάσαι [ΔΔΔΔΠΤ] . . . . . τοῖς ἐγλαβοῦσι γράφαι τὰς σκηνὰς  
καὶ τὰ παρασκήνια τὰ τε ἐπάνω καὶ τὰ ὑποκάτω δραχμῶν ΧΧ[Π] . . . .  
. . . . τῷ ἐγλαβόντι . . . . σαι τὸ παρασκήνιον τὸ ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ δραχμῶν  
ΗΗΗ[ΠΔΔΔΔ] . . . . . Θρασυλέῳ τῷ ἐγλαβόντι ἐργάσασθαι τὸ ἐπι-  
στύ[λιον] . . . . \[ΙΟΥ] . . . . Ἀρχέλα . . . καταχρίσαντι τὸ τεῖχος τῆς σκηνῆς  
κατὰ τὴν συγγραφὴν ἀπέδομεν τὸ γινόμενον ἀρχιτέκτονος κελεύοντος καὶ τῶν  
ἐπιμελητῶν.

269 B. C. τὴν σκηνὴν τὴν ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ ἀνακαθάρασι [Τ] . . . . .  
παρὰ Τέλλωνος ἀτράκτους δύο ὥστε κλίμα[κα] εἰς τὸ θέατρον [ΤΤΤ] . . . . .  
. . . Θεοδῆμῳ κλιμακτῆρας παρασχόντι καὶ κατασκευάσαντι [ΤΤΤΙΙΙ] . . . . .  
Διονυσίῳ ἐγλαβόντι τὴν ὀρχήστραν τοῦ θεάτρον καταχρίσαι τὴν πρώτην δόσιν  
ἔδομεν . . . . . Σωσιμένει Ἀντιγόνου τῶν λίθων τῶν τῆς εἰς τὸν θησαυρὸν (?)  
ἔδομεν . . . . . Ἀντίκῳ τῆς διόδου τῆς ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ . . . . . Ἀντίκῳ  
Καῖκου ἐγλαβόντι καθάραι τὸν τόπον τῇ διόδῳ τῇ ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ πάντα κύκλῳ  
ἔδομεν . . . . . Ἀριστοκλεῖ καὶ Καλλιμένει τῆς λιθείας τῆς εἰς τὸ παρα-  
σκήνιον ἐκ ποδῶν πεντακοσίων ἔδομεν . . . . . Φιλανδρίδει Παρίῳ τῆς  
[λιθείας] τῆς εἰς τὰς κρηπίδας [τὰς] ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ ἐγλαβόντι πόδας χιλίους  
ἔδομεν . . . . . λίθων τῶν εἰς τὸ θέατρον . . . . .

250 B. C. τὸ θέατρον ἀνακαθάραι . . . . . κλεῖς καὶ χελώνιον ἐπὶ τὸν  
Ἰνωπὸν καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ Ἡράκλειον καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν σκηνὴν . . . . . Παρμένοντι  
ἀνακαθάραντι τὴν ἐπαγωγίδα τὴν ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ . . . . . Ὀφελίῳ τοὺς κρου-  
νοὺς διακαθάραντι τοὺς ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ . . . . . Νεογένει ἐπιγράψαντι ἐπὶ τὸ  
προσκήνιον . . . . . τῆς λιθείας τῆς εἰς τὸ θέατρον ἐξέδομεν πόδας  
διακοσίους, τὸμ πόδα δραχμῶν [ΠΤ] . . . . . τῆς ἐργασίας τοῦ  
ἐπιθεάτρον ἐξέδομεν πόδας διακοσίους . . . . . Εὐκλείδει ἐργολαβήσαντι τὸν  
ὀρθοστάτην καὶ τὸν καταληπτῆρα θῆναι καὶ ἐργάσασθαι ἐν τῷ ἐπιθεάτρῳ . . .

180 B. C. [ξύλον . . . κατεχρήσθη εἰς] τὴν κατασκευὴν τῶν πινάκων τῶν  
ἐπὶ τὸ λογεῖον.

The earliest notices refer to the old wooden structure. The erection of a stone theatre was apparently begun about 275 B. C., and completed in the course of the third century. A large part of this theatre still remains. But the stone proscenium of the Vitruvian type, of which the foundations are preserved, was probably a later work constructed in the second century B. C. This proscenium is not enclosed by side-wings (παρασκήνια), but open at both ends (see Fig. 12). But the inscription for 269 B. C. expressly mentions τῆς λιθείας τῆς εἰς τὸ παρασκήνιον. Hence it is probable that in the stage-buildings erected in the middle of the third century the stage was of wood, and was terminated at each end by stone side-wings. In the second century,

when a regular stone proscenium was erected, these side-wings were removed (see Dörpfeld, Griech. Theater, p. 148).

The word *σκηνή* is used in the inscriptions in two senses. It denotes (1) the stage-buildings as a whole, e.g. *τοὺς κρουνοὺς τοὺς ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ*, (2) the wall at the rear of the stage, or the boards by which that wall was covered, e.g. *τὴν σκηνὴν τὴν μέσην καὶ τὰ παρασκήνια, τὰς σκηναὺς καὶ τὰ παρασκήνια*. This wall or boarding is called *ἡ μέση σκηνή* as opposed to the *παρασκήνια* on each side, and *αἱ ἐπάνω σκηναί* in opposition to the *προσκήνιον* underneath (so Homolle, l. c. p. 165). Apparently the whole building was only two stories, and the back-scene rose one story above the stage. Bethe, however (Prolegomena, p. 234), suggests that there were three stories; that *ἡ μέση σκηνή* denoted the middle story, and *αἱ ἐπάνω σκηναί* the top story, of the back-scene; the bottom story being concealed behind the *προσκήνιον*. But as only two stories are mentioned in connexion with the side-wings (*τὰ παρασκήνια τὰ τε ἐπάνω καὶ τὰ ὑποκάτω*), it seems unlikely that the central part of the building should have had more than two.

Some of the technical terms are new. The lines of seats in the early theatre are called *ὀλκοί*, as resembling furrows dug in the slope of the auditorium. The horizontal passage dividing the upper belt (*διάζωμα*) of seats from the lower is the *δίοδος*. The word *περικουδομία* seems to denote the wall by which the outside of the auditorium was enclosed and supported where necessary. The *ἐπιθέατρον* must have been the upper belt of seats. The *ὀρθοστάτης* and *καταληπτήρ* are explained by Homolle as a sort of balustrade and coping by which the top of the auditorium was finished off. The *κλίμαξ* and *κλιμακτῆρες* may have been the steps leading up from orchestra to stage; but this is not certain. See on these points Homolle, l. c., p. 163 foll.





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